

THE
WORKS
OF
JAMES HERVEY, A. M.

LATE RECTOR OF WESTON-PAVILL,

In Northamptonshire.

Vol. 6.

CONTAINING

Letters to the Reverend Mr. Hervey.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND DEATH

By these he being dead, yet speaketh. Heb. xi. 4.

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1823.

ON THE
DEATH

OF THE
REV. MR. HERVEY.

** N. B. The Reader may be assured that these Verses were wrote by a very serious and well-disposed young Apprentice to a Jersey Comber, in the town of Northampton, in a low station of life, and of no liberal education ; whose mind, by Mr. Hervey's preaching and writings, had been very early impressed with the sacred ardor of piety and poetry.*

URANIA speak ! in pensive numbers tell,
How Zion trembled when good Hervey fell !
When fail'd his strength, and when his pulse beat low,
Till how she m'burn'd to see th' impending blow !
O thou, to whom all sacred themes belong,
Pour forth the sweet melancholy song !
Alas ! grim death hath shot the fatal dart,
Which long seem'd pointed at his languid heart,
Th' insatiate tyrant, crown'd with fun'ral gloom, |
In triumph drags him to the hollow tomb ;
Who now so well can paint the blooming * flower,
Or preach from sepulchres at midnight hour ?
Who now so well the starry heavens scan,
And read the lecture nature meant for man ?
Now shall thousands sound his pulpit throng
To teach the heavenly precepts of his tongue ;
Shall shove this gross impure air,
Reliev'd from every pain and every care :
He leaves aloft (angelic hosts his guide)

* Alluding to his Sermons on the Flower Garden, and Meditations on the Tomb, To his Contemplations on the Night, and on the Starry Majesty.

' On wings new plum'd, which ~~at~~^{er} before he try'd,
 ' With rapid speed his golden pinions rise
 ' Thro' starry plains, and skur th' Empyrean skies.
 ' His Lord receives him 'midst celestial choirs,
 ' Who crown his head, and strike their golden lyres ;
 ' thro' heaven's glad courts the greeting anthems roll,
 ' And joys new blossoming feast his ravish'd sou ;
 ' Joys which to tell all eloquence is faint,
 ' And which the loftiest muse can never paint.'



THE
LIFE
OF THE
REV. MR. HERVEY.

THE Reverend Mr. *James Hervey* was the eldest son, and born on *Friday*, the 26th of *February*, 1713-14, at *Hardingstone*, a country village, one mile from *Northampton*; his father being then Minister of the Parish of *Collingtree*, within two miles of *Hurdlingstone*. His first instruction was from his mother, who taught him his letters, and to read; and under her tuition he continued till he was seven years of age, when he was sent as a day-scholar to the Free-Grammar School at *Northampton*, of which the Reverend Mr. *Clarke*, Vicar of *St. Sepulchre's*, in the said town, was at that time master.

At this school he remained till he was seventeen years old, and learned the Latin and Greek languages, in which his genius and memory would have enabled him to have made a much earlier progress if he had not been prevented by his school-master, who would not suffer him or any other of his scholars to learn faster than his own son. Whilst Mr. Hervey was at school, though he shewed a remarkable dexterity at all the innocent games usual among children, bringing home his pockets loaded with marbles, and several halfpence won at chuck; yet he had a perfect indifference for the acquisition he made by his skill in these games, which he practised only for exercise and amusement. His mother would often clear his pockets at night

of his marbles, &c. and he troubled his head no farther about them..

In the year 1731, at the age of seventeen, he was sent by his father to the University of Oxford, and entered of Lincoln College there under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. *Hutchins*, now Doctor and Rector of that College. He resided in the University five years, yet only took the degree of Bachelor of Arts*. The first two or three years indeed were spent by him with some degree of indolence, or rather less applications to his studies than he afterwards used. But in 1733, about his nineteenth year, becoming acquainted with some persons who began to distinguish themselves by their serious impressions of religion, and their zeal for the promotion of it, he was engaged by their influence in a stricter attachment both to piety and learning; of the former there are conspicuous marks in his letters † written to his sister in the years 1733, 1734, and 1735: and of the latter, in the course of his studies. He made himself master of Dr. *James Keil's Anatomy* Dr. *Derham's Physico-Theology* and *Astro-Theology*, the *spectacle de la nature*, as translated by Mr. *Humphreys*; which last work he read over with a peculiar satisfaction. Nor was he less delighted by the *essay on Pope's Odyssey*, written by the Rev. Mr. *Spence*, now prebendary of *Durham*; to which elegant and judicious discourse Mr. *Hervey* often acknowledged that he owed more of his improvement in style and composition, than to any other, which he had ever read.

In 1734, at the persuasion of a much valued friend, he began to learn the *Hebrew* language without any teacher, by the *Westminster* grammar itself; but soon found that grammar too concise and difficult for the instruction of a learner; and therefore then despaired of ever attaining a competent knowledge in the *Hebrew*, though he afterwards made himself so thorough a master of that sacred language.

* Mr. Hervey took his degree of Master of Arts at Cambridge, in 1736, when he was bred at *Clare-Hall*; and as he was of justice a student at *Cambridge*, he had only the few days required by the statutes to perform the customary exercises.

He entered no holy orders as soon as his age and the canons of the church would allow *, and immediately after his ordination, he officiated as a Curate at *Dummer* in *Hampshire*.

The first of his writings which raised the attention of the public, was his *Meditations and Contemplations, containing Meditations among the tombs, reflections on a flower-garden and a diſcant on creation*, published in February 1745-6. Of this kind of writing we had before an example from no less a man than the great philosopher, Mr. † *Boyle*, in his occasional reflections on several subjects, written in his younger years.

Mr. *Hervey's* performance was so well received by the public, that it has already passed through fourteen editions, a second volume, containing *Contemplations on the night and Starry Heavens, and a Winter-Piece*, having been published in December 1747.

On the death of his father in May 1752, Mr. *Hervey* succeeded him in the family livings of *Weston-Favell*, within two miles of *Northampton*, worth about 100*l.* and of *Colington*, five miles from it, worth about 80*l.* a year.

In November following, he published in Octavo, his remarks on Lord *Bolingbroke's* letters on the study and use of history, so far as they relate to the history of the old testament, and especially to the case of Noah denouncing a curse upon Canaan; in a letter to a lady of quality † ?

The year following having been called upon to preach on the 10th of May the sermon at the visitation of the Reverend John Brown, D. D. Archdeacon of *Northampton*, at *All Saint's* church in that town; he permitted it the same year, for the benefit of a poor diseased child, to be printed under the title of *the cross of Christ the christian's glory*.

* That he was in orders in the beginning of 1737, appears from his fifth letter, page 1 dated May 7, of that year.

† See Boyle's life, by the Rev. Mr. Boscawen, &c.

‡ The Rev. Mr. Peter Boscawen, Vicar of St. Sepulchre's, in *Northampton*, has published, by way of supplement to his piece of Mr. *Hervey's*, a vindication of the wisdom and authenticity of the poem from the objections of the late Lord *Bolingbroke*, price

He had preached before this another sermon at the same church, which he had been solicited to print, but could not then be prevailed upon to do it; but since his death it has been published under the title of "The ministry of reconciliation, representing the benign tendency of the gospel; and that it is the friendly office of ministers, as the ambassadors, or agents of Christ to press men with all imaginable tenderness, humility, and earnestness, to accept the treaty of reconciliation, as established in him, and urged by him while on earth."

In 1753, he wrote a recommendatory preface to *Burnham's pious memorials, or the power of religion on the mind in sickness, and death*; exemplified by the experience of many eminent persons at those important seasons.

His *Theron and Aspasio*, published in January 1755, in three volumes octavo, met with the same approbation from the public as his *Meditations*; and the demand for this work likewise was very uncommon.

The year following Mr. Hervey being informed of the design of reprinting *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*, by the Rev. Mr. Walter Marshall, formerly fellow of New College, Oxford, and afterwards of Winchester College, and of prefixing to it by way of recommendation, what he had said in its favor in *Theron and Aspasio**, he wrote a letter, dated November 5, to his Bookseller, giving his consent and enlarging on that recommendation. This he did the more readily, as Mr. Marshall's book might (for so he has declared) be looked upon as no improper† supplement to the Dialogues and Letters contained in *Theron and Aspasio*. But to obviate the tendency, or at least misapplication of some principles laid down both by Mr. Marshall and his great admirer, Mr. Hervey, a fourth edition was undertaken of an excellent work of Dr. Edward Fowler, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, first published in the year 1761, and entitled "The Design of christianity, or a plain de-

* Vol. III. p. 336, third edition.

† See letter, XXV. Vol. II. page 50.

"monstration, that the enduing men with inward, real
 "righteousness (or true holiness) was the ultimate end of
 "our Saviour's coming into the world, and is the great in-
 "tention of his blessed gospel." This new edition was
 published in 1739, with a letter prefixed to it on the repu-
 blication of Bishop Fowler's Book: The anonymous writer
 of which letter introduces into it some animadversions on
 both *Mr. Marshall* and *Mr. Hervey*; the latter of whom
 he styles †, a most elegant writer now with God, and a tru-
 ly amiable devout advocate for the all-sufficiency of Christ's
 righteousness. Some passages in *Theron and Aspasio* gave
 offence likewise to several who were attached in general to
 the author's own favourite system of calvinism: The Armi-
 nians too objected to that work; and *Mr. John † Wesley*,
 in particular, with some others wrote against it.

Mr. Hervey's own defence of *Theron and Aspasio* against
 the objections of *Mr. John Wesley*, was transcribed fair for
 the press from his short-hand copy, within a few pages, and
 would probably have been published in a volume of the
 same size with *Theron and Aspasio*, had he lived a few
 weeks longer. This manuscript § is now in possession of
 his brother *Mr. William Hervey*, wine merchant, in Miles's-
 Lane, London.

In August, 1757, *Mr. Hervey* obliged the public with the
 substance of three sermons preached by him on the late
 public fast-days; to which in the third edition in 1759, were
 added his Visitation sermon preached in 1733; his post-
 humous sermon on the Ministry of Reconciliation; and his
 Consideration on the prevailing custom of visiting on Sun-
 days.

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†, Page 13

† See *Wesley's* preface to his *selected sermons on religion*. Price two shillings.

§ The manuscript of this defence, which *Mr. Hervey* had been written, & is
 printed by his brother.

In the same year likewise, he published a new edition of his favourite author, *Mr. Jenk's Meditations*, in two volumes, octavo; to which he wrote a very strong recommendatory preface, shewing the use of those *Meditations*, and the reasons for such republication.

His labours both in his ministerial office, and in his study, were pursued by him as long as possible, under the disadvantage of a very weak constitution of body; which, together with the severity of his last illness, he supported not only with incredible patience, but without a single expression of peevishness. That illness had long been coming on him, but greatly increased in the beginning of *October 1758*, and grew very formidable in the *December* following; for on *Sunday* the third of that month in the evening, after prayer in his family, he seemed to be arrested by the messenger of death, so that the united assistance of his sister and servant, with difficulty, enabled him to get up stairs into his room, from whence he never came down. His illness gaining ground every day, he soon became sensible that his end was approaching. He had frequent and violent returns of the cramp, which, gave him most acute pain. He had likewise a hie tick cough, which afflicted him so grievously in the night, that he could seldom lie in bed till four † in the morning; and was often obliged to rise at two, especially as opium (how much soever guarded by other medicines) would not agree with him. On the fifteenth of that month he complained of a pain in his side, for which, at his own desire, he was blooded; though his physician, *Dr. Stenhouse*, in whom he placed the greatest confidence, had objected to it; finding his pulse very low, and apprehending him too weak to bear any evacuation of that kind.—When the surgeon came, he could scarcely perceive any pulsation, and therefore took away no more than four ounces of blood, intimating to his relations and friends, that the case was desperate, and that he had blooded him.

† When Mr. Hervey was in tolerable health, he rarely lay in bed after six, even in the winter, and rose still earlier in the autumn.

very unwillingly, and merely to satisfy Mr. *Hervey's* desire, who had some hope that the pain might possibly be relieved by it. His curate, the Rev. Mr. *Abraham Maddock*, being much with him in the afternoon of that day, Mr. *Hervey* spoke to him in strong and pathetic terms of his assurance of faith, and of the great love of God in Christ, "Oh I said he, what has Christ done for me; and how little have I done for so loving a Saviour! if I preached even once a week, it was at last a burden to me. I have not visited the people of my parish, as I ought to have done, and thus have preached, as it were, from house to house. I have not taken every opportunity of speaking for Christ."

These expressions being accompanied with tears which too visible not to be observed; and lest his tears should be misinterpreted, as they had been conversing about his expected end, and of his assurance of happiness; he proceeded thus. "Do not think, that I am afraid to die; I assure you I am not. I know what my Saviour hath done for me, and I want to be gone. But I wonder and lament to think of the love of Christ in doing so much for me; and how little have I done for him." And in another conversation, discoursing likewise of his approaching dissolution, which he did with the utmost calmness and serenity, and of the little which we know of God's word, he said, "how many precious texts are there big with the most rich truths of Christ, which we cannot comprehend, of which we know nothing; and of those we do know, how few do we remember? Bonus Textuarius est, bonus Theologus. A good textuary is a good divine; and *that* is the armour, the word of God is the sword. Those texts are the weapons, which I must use when that subtle spirit, that arch-adversary of mankind, comes to tempt and sift me in my last conflict. Surely, I had need be well provided with these weapons; I had need have my quiver full of them, to answer satan with texts out of the word of God, when he assaults me." Thus did Christ when he tempted in the wilderness.

On the 19th the pains of his body abated, and he grew drowsy and lethargic; but in the night following his immediate death was apprehended.

The next day (the 20th) he was visited by his very worthy and learned friend Dr. Stonhouse, who declared, that in his opinion, Mr. Hervey could not live above three or four days; and happening to speak of the many consolations through Christ, which a good man enjoys in the prospect of death, and discoursing on the emptiness of worldly honour, to an immortal, and on the unprofitableness of riches to the irreligious; Mr. Hervey replied, "True, doctor, true, the
 "only valuable treasures are in heaven. What would it
 "avail me now to be archbishop of Canterbury? Disease
 "would shew no respect to my mitre. That prelate † is
 "not only very great, but I am told, he has religion really
 "at heart: yet it is godliness and not grandeur, that will
 "avail him hereafter. The gospel is offered to me a poor
 "country parson, the same as to his grace. Christ makes
 "no difference between us. Oh! why then do ministers
 "thus neglect the charge of so kind a Saviour; fawn upon
 "the great, and hunt after worldly preferments with so
 "much eagerness, to the disgrace of our orders? These,
 "these are the things, doctor, and not our poverty, or ob-
 "scurity, which render the clergy so justly contemptible
 "to the worldlings. No wonder the service of our church
 "(grieved I am to say it) is become such a formal, lifeless
 "thing, since it is alas! too generally executed by persons
 "dead to godliness in all their conversation; whose indif-
 "ference to religion, and worldly-minded behaviour, pro-
 "claims the little regard they pay to the doctrines of the
 "Lord, who bought them." ●

When the doctor was going away, Mr. Hervey with great tenderness observed to him, that as not long ago he had a dangerous fall from his horse, by which he was much bruised; and as he had been lately ill, and then looked very pale, he hoped he would think on these narrow escapes, so

often fatal to others, as a kind warning from God to him, and remember them as such; adding, "How careful ought we to be to improve these years which remain, at a time of life, when but a few can remain for us!"

The day before his death, Mr. Hervey went a few steps across his room, but immediately finding his strength failing him, he sunk rather than fell down; his fall being broken by his sister, who observing his weakness, ran and caught him, but he fainted away, and was in all appearance dead, it being a considerable time before any pulse could be perceived. When he came to himself, and his brother Mr. William Hervey, who was come from London to visit him, said, "We were afraid you was gone:" he answered, "I wish I had." And well he might wish so, for his strength was quite exhausted, his body extremely emaciated and his bones so sore, he could not bear any one to touch him, when it was necessary to move him about. Yet under all this calamity he was ever praising God for his mercies, and for enduring him with patience.

On the 25th (Christmas day) on which he died, his curate paying him a morning visit, Mr. Hervey lifted up his head, and opened his eyes, as he sat in his easy chair (for he could not lie in bed) to see who it was, and said, "Sir, I cannot talk with you." He complained much all this day of a great inward conflict which he had, laying his hand upon his breast, and saying, "Oh! you know not how great a conflict I have." During this time, he almost constantly lifted up his eyes towards heaven, with his hands clasped together in a praying form, and said, two or three times, "When this great counsel is over, then—" but said no more; though it was understood, that then he should go to rest.

Dr. Stouthome came to him about three hours before he expired: Mr. Hervey urged strongly and affectionately to

* Dr. Stouthome and Mr. Hervey being then between forty and fifty years old.

† He never received a bit of linen to moisten his mouth, without thanking God for his bounty and goodness, in creating so many helps and comforts to a sick and decaying body.

the Doctor the importance and care of his everlasting concerns, as here is no abiding place, and intreated him not to be over-charged with * the cares of this life ; but to attend amidst the multiplicity of his business, to the “ one thing † needful ;”

Which done, the poorest can no wants endure ;
And which not done, the richest must be poor †.

POPE.

The Doctor, seeing the great difficulty and pain with which he spoke, (for he was almost suffocated with phlegm and frequent vomitings) and finding by his pulse, that the pangs of death were then coming on, desired that he would spare himself. “ No, said he, Doctor, no ; you tell me I have but a few moments to live, O ! let me spend them “ in adoring our great Redeemer.” He then repeated the 26th verse of the lxxvii Psalm, *Though my flesh and my heart fail me, yet God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever* ; and he expatiated in the most striking manner on these words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. *All things are yours, life and death, for ye are Christ's* &c. “ Here “ says he, is the treasure of a christian. Death is reckoned “ among this inventory ; and a noble treasure it is. How “ thankful am I for death, as it is the passage, to which I “ pass to the Lord and Giver of eternal life ; and as it frees “ me from all this misery you now see me endure, and “ which I am willing to endure, as long as God thinks fit ; “ for I know, he will by and by, in his own good time, “ dismiss me from the body. These light afflictions are

* See Luke xxi. 34. † Luke x. 37.

‡ Mr. Hervey used frequently to repeat these lines with such an emphasis, and significant look, as conveyed their important meaning in a manner not easily to be forgot.

§ This passage is illustrated in a very instructive manner by Dr. Doddridge, in his family expositor, and contains the substance of what Mr. Hervey said, and to which he referred.

“but for a moment, and then comes an eternal weight of glory. Oh welcome, welcome death!—Thou mayst well be reckoned amongst the treasures of the Christian. “To live is Christ, but to die is gain.” After which, as the Doctor was taking his final leave of him, Mr. Hervey expressed great gratitude for his visits, though it had long been out of the power of medicines to cure him. He then paused a little, and with great serenity and sweetness in his countenance, though the pangs of death were upon him, being raised a little in his chair, repeated those words, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy most holy and comfortable word, for mine eyes have seen thy precious salvation*. “Here, Doctor, is my cordial: What are all the cordials given to support the dying, in comparison of that, which arises from the promises of salvation by Christ?” This, this supports me. About three o’clock he said, The great conflict is over.—Now all is “done”. After which he scarce spoke any other words intelligibly, except now and then, *precious salvation*.

During the last hour he said nothing, but leaned his head against the side of an easy chair, and without a sigh, groan, struggle, or the least emotion in the world, he shut his eyes, and died between four and five in the afternoon, on *Christmas day*, 1728, in the forty fifth year of his age.—God grant that we may all live the life, and die the death of the *righteous*—and that *our* last end may be like his.

When his body was conveyed to church, it was covered by his express desire with the poor’s pall, and he was buried under the middle of the Communion-Table in the Chancel of *Weston Parrett* church, on *Friday, December 28*, in the presence of a numerous congregation, full of regret for the loss of so excellent a pastor. His funeral was indeed a most awful and very affecting sight.—Mr. *Madluck*, his curate, who buried him, was himself in tears.—Some were wringing their hands, others sobbing, many were silently weeping, but all were inwardly and sincerely grieved, as their looks sufficiently testified—and his attendants then bore a visible witness that he had not been altogether unserviceable in his generation.—The poor thankfully ac-

acknowledged it; and, as they looked into his grave, seemed to say, within themselves, "There lies the man, whose unwearied kindness was the constant relief of my various distresses, who tenderly visited my languishing bed, readily supplied my indigent circumstances."—Others, once ignorant and ungodly, looked at his grave, and seemed by their expressive sighs to say, "Here are the last remains of that sincere friend, who watched for my soul.—I tremble to think into what irretrievable ruin I might quickly have been plunged, had not his faithful admonitions and repeated exhortations, arrested me in the wild career. I was then unacquainted with the gospel of peace, but now enlightened by his instructions, I see the all sufficiency of my Saviour. His counsels are still warm on my heart, and I trust will be more and more operative on my life."

It may truly be said of him that few lives have ever been more heavenly:—Few deaths have ever been more triumphant.—He died in the Lord, and is now at rest; where even the wicked cease from troubling; his name is recorded in the annals of eternity, and the honours conferred on him by Christ will for ever continue blooming and incorruptible in the world of glory.

His character, both in his public and private capacity, was of the most exemplary kind.

As a minister, he performed all the duties of that office with the greatest strictness. In the pulpit he was earnest and fervent, and shewed that he felt the efficacy of what he preached. Nor did he think it sufficient to preach on Sundays only, but set up a weekly lecture at seven every Wednesday evening †, at *Weston-Favell* church, which was very well attended. His zeal for the performance of his duty

* See the *Meditations on the Tomb*, Vol. I. page 63.

† This lecture was held once every week, any time, and harvest only excepted, and such, that it might not interfere with the work of the labouring people. The church he illuminated, during the winter season, out of his own pocket; and charging no part the parish to any additional expence.—See Vol. II. page 86.

was, however, for some time before he died, much interrupted by the ill state of his health, which would not permit him personally to take due care even of the parish of *Wotton*, where he resided — A circumstance that gave him inexpressible concern. — The last two or three years of his life he could scarce do any thing more than preach once on a *Sunday*, when people from many miles around flocked to hear him. His *Wednesday* evening lecture at seven he discontinued for the last year. He had not been * able for some time to preach at *Collingtree*, or to visit his parishioners at their own houses, as his custom had been; but he encouraged them to come to him, and to converse freely upon the subjects relating to their eternal interests, and on such occasions he would speak with a force and propriety peculiar to himself. He would frequently lament his inability to serve his people, comparing himself to a bleeding disabled soldier, and *only not slain*.

He always preached without notes, except on some very particular occasions; but his discourse was judicious, clear, and free from tautology. His weakness rendering him for several months before his death incapable of speaking to his congregation as usual, he shortened his discourses, and took a most useful method of inculcating his instructions; for, after he had explained his text, and divided his sermon into two general heads (rarely into more, and never exceeding three) he would add a few particulars, that his matter might be better retained in the memory. And at the conclusion of each head he would enforce what he had said, by a pertinent text of scripture, desiring his congregation (which was generally very numerous) to turn to their bibles, and double down that text. "Now," added he, my dear brethren, if you forget my sermon, you cannot forget God's

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* It is not certain how long he was unable to preach; but it is probable that he was so for some time before his death in May 1733; when he kept possession of the two lower limbs, which being united by a measure of each other, Mr. Hervey and his mother-in-law, who were both blind, could not see each other, and Mr. Hervey could not see his mother-in-law, and his mother-in-law could not see Mr. Hervey.

"word in this text, unless you wilfully throw your bibles aside. Shew these to your children, or the absent part of your family when you return home." Then he gave a striking exhortation, and at the end of it another text for them to double down, so that they had always three texts; in order to their finding of which, he paused in the pulpit two or three minutes. This method was attended with another good effect:—It obliged the generality of his hearers to bring their bibles, for those who were without a bible lost the benefit of the texts, and were unemployed, while the majority who had one were busy in looking for the passages referred to in his sermon.

He endeavoured as much as possible to divest himself in his public discourses of his usual elegance of style, and to adapt his language to the lowest capacity. In this he followed the example of *Luther*, who in his Table-talk says, "If in my preaching I were to pay a regard to *Philip Melancthon*, and other learned divines, then I should do little good. I preach in the plainest manner to the illiterate, and that gives content to all. *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin*, I spare till we learned ones come together." Mr. *Hervey* thought perspicuous language and evangelical doctrine of much more importance to his parishioners, than elaborate, or ornamented discourses: though few men living, perhaps, were more capable of satisfying a polite or learned audience.

His method of catechising children in church, and of speaking to them in private, was very engaging and useful. He would put little questions to them after they had repeated the words of the catechism; as for instance, "Well, my little maid, let me hear if you understand what you said? If you do understand the meaning of these words, you will then be able to answer the questions I shall put to you *." He would at these times ask not only such questions as were suitable to the words of the catechism; but also such as would strike at the capital vices of his parishioners, yet without giving personal offence.

* See some better account of his manner of catechising, in one of his letters, page 235 of the volume.

He did not forget that he was a minister in his house, for he worshipped God with his family twice a day. He supped at eight every night, and at nine he expounded a text of scripture for about a quarter of an hour, and seldom longer, except when some friend was present, to whom he thought his discourse might be useful, or when particularly requested to enlarge.—After this, he concluded with prayer.

He breakfasted at nine, and about eight he called his family together and required each of his servants to recollect by heart the text which he had explained the preceding evening; and then he would recapitulate his exposition; by which method both his text and commentary were imprinted on their memories: after this he had prayers.

In the afternoon, when he was called down to tea, he used to bring his Hebrew Bible, or Greek testament with him, and would speak (as he was ever studious how he might promote the glory of God, and improve time) either upon one or more verses, as occasion offered, in the most instructive and entertaining manner imaginable. And in the summer season he would now and then drink tea, when his health would permit him, with some of his most serious parishioners; and then five or six of the neighbours were invited, and Mr. Hervey's conversation was remarkably affecting, as he had a happy talent at spiritualizing almost every incident; and was naturally of a most obliging and cheerful disposition. He was a member of the Assembly for *Christian Improvement*, so long as he was able to ride thither; the plan of which is mentioned by Mr. Hervey in the XXXIVth letter of this first volume, page 149.—It was established in his neighbourhood on July the 7th, 1747:—and as the Rules and orders may probably be the means of promoting other assemblies of the like kind in different parts of the kingdom, they are here published by particular desire; presuming that the reader will excuse this interpolation of the narrative.

RULES AND ORDERS,

OF THE ASSEMBLY

FOR

Christian Improvement.

God is greatly to be feared in the Assemblies of his Saints ; and to be had in reverence by all that are round about him. Psalm lxxviii. 9.

I.

THAT this assembly consist of no more than ten or twelve at the utmost, lest an increased number should produce confusion or dissention ; and that each member, in order to prevent any sinister reflections from the inconsiderate, or vicious, be cautious of mentioning to any others that he belongs to such * an assembly.——And that each member before he sets off, and on his return, shall use either the forms of prayer, which are specified in the Minutes, (and particularly adapted to this occasion) or others to the same purport.

II.

That no one shall be admitted a member, who has not been proposed by the chairman at the preceding assembly .

* As this assembly met at different Inns, public prayer would have alarmed the attendants, and caused gross misrepresentations—besides the real design of this meeting was known only to a few ; and the injunction of secrecy was given to each member, in order to avoid the appearance of religious ostentation, and in compliance with the apostle's precept, viz. Let not your good be evil spoken of, Rom. xlv. 16.

—Or who shall be disproved of by any two members on a ballot, which shall always be taken on such occasions, how unanimous soever the members may seem to beforehand.

III.

That the members shall be registered alphabetically in the Minutes of the assembly's proceedings, and that the chairman of the day be appointed regularly, according to that list; so that no misunderstanding may arise about precedence; and that a treasurer be elected annually, the first Tuesday in January.

IV.

That the assembly meet on the first Tuesday in every month during the Summer season, punctually at twelve o'clock; and on the moon-light Tuesday, during the Winter season, exactly at ten, at such Inn as shall from time to time be agreed on by the majority; and that dinner be ready precisely at two in the summer, and one in the winter.

V.

That as soon as the Assembly is met, the names of the present members shall be entered in the Minutes, and the forfeits (if there be any due) deposited in the charity purse. —After which the chairman shall enquire if the prayers, as agreed upon by the assembly, and entered in their Minutes, have been properly used by each Member at his own home. Then he shall in a short charge, or exhortation, remind his associates of the importance of such a meeting, and enumerate the good effects, which the selected chapters if rightly improved, may produce.

VI.

The chairman shall then read the chapter in the old testament in English, and shall pause at the end of every verse, that any one who pleases may make such inquiries and re-

flections, as may occasionally arise; but that no two persons speak at a time, and if two accidentally begin, the chairman shall direct which his to go on.—And that every member shall, against the next meeting, send to the chairman whatever observation of his on the chapter of the day, the members then present had desired to have entered in their Minutes: by which method, many useful observations may be preserved: and in case any verse shall not be cleared of its difficulties to the satisfaction of the present members, the said verse shall be re-considered at the next meeting.

VII.

At three o'clock precisely, during the summer season (no more than an hour being allowed for dining) the chairman shall proceed in reading a chapter in *Greek* out of the new testament, to be commented on in like manner as that out of the old. But in the winter season, when the assembly meet at ten, the chapter both in the old as well as the new testament, shall be read before dinner; and after dinner no other business than that specified in the ninth article shall be entered on.

VIII.

That the two chapters to be considered by the assembly at their next meeting, be previously appointed before the adjournment of every assembly, either by the succeeding chairman, if present, or in case of his absence, by the majority; of which chapter, the absent members shall have timely notice sent them in writing.

IX.

That at every meeting (as time permits) each member in an alphabetical order, shall be desired to give an account of some religious author (which he has read in the preceding month) in as concise and succinct a manner as possible.

X.

That at every meeting, half a crown shall be given by each member for charitable uses; and that at the end of the year the money shall be expended in cloathing or educating such poor persons, or relieving such incurables, as the members in their alphabetical order shall recommend to the assembly.

XI.

That every member who is absent, though occasioned by the most urgent business, or even indisposition (unless such indisposition shall continue longer than a month, shall pay half a crown towards the charity-purse, and one shilling and six-pence towards the dinner in the same manner as if he had been present.

XII.

That the assembly break * up by seven in the summer, and by four in the winter, and that each member on his return home use the form of prayer which is specified in our Minutes, and peculiarly adapted to this occasion; or some other of a similar nature.

We whose names are underwritten, have this day (being the seventh day of *July* 1747) subscribed our assent to these rules and orders, as witness our hands,

* Some of the members lived five or six miles from the place of meeting, which was always a quarter of eight miles, and as near the centre of each members residence as could be desired.

THE
FORM OF PRAYER

Composed by Mr. Hervey.

TO BE USED BY EACH MEMBER BEFORE SITTING OUT OF THE
ASSEMBLY.

*Lord thou hast said, where two or three are gathered together in thy name
there am I in the midst of them. Matt. xviii. 20.*

ALMIGHTY and immortal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through him, the God of all mercies, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to look down upon us thy sinful servants, who are preparing to meet together in thy name, and with an humble desire to build up one another in our most holy religion. Pardon all our iniquities through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and make us and our services accepted through the beloved. O heavenly father, unite us to one another by mutual love, and to thy blessed self by faith unfeigned. Enlighten our minds with the knowledge of thy truth, and sanctify our hearts by the power of thy grace. Direct our counsels, and prosper all our endeavours, to the glory of thy divine majesty, and the salvation of our own, and the souls of others.—Grant this, most gracious God, through the precious death, and never-ceasing intercession of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The second Collect in Advent.

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in thy son our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

The FORM of PRAYER composed by *Mr. Hervey*, to be used by each MEMBER when returned from the ASSEMBLY.

Lord thou hast said, if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. Matt. xviii. 19.

O LORD God of our salvation, thou giver of every good and perfect gift, we adore thy glorious name and beneficence, for the redemption of our souls by Jesus Christ, and for all thy other unnumbered and undeserved mercies. In a particular manner we praise thy unspeakable goodness, for the valuable opportunity we have this day enjoyed, of provoking one another to love, and to good works. Pity our infirmities, most merciful father, and pardon whatever thou hast seen amiss in the tenour of our conversation, or in the spirit of our minds.—Sanctify, we humbly beseech thee, thy holy word, which we have heard. Command it to sink deep into our souls, and to be a lively and lasting principle of godliness in our hearts. Oh! let us, by every such conference, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; that through thy infinitely precious favor, we may become sted-

fast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity : and so much the more, as we see the day approaching.—And, forasmuch as we are now separated into a world, where wickedness abounds, preserve us, O God our defence, from the least infection, and from every appearance of evil. Inspire us with wisdom, so to order our conversation, that we may give no just occasion of offence in any thing. Endue us with holiness, that we may adorn the gospel of God our Saviour in all things ; and animate us with such a steady and well-tempered zeal, that neither the slothfulness of our nature, nor the fear of the world, may withhold us from pursuing such courses, as may be conducive to the glory of thy blessed name, the advancement of true religion, and the salvation of our immortal souls.—This, and whatsoever else is needful for us, and carrying on the work, which thou hast given us to do, we humbly beg, for the sake of Jesus Christ our only Mediator, and all-sufficient Redeemer.—*Amen.*

The Collect for Ascension Day.

GRANT, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe thy only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, to have ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart and mind * thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, world without end.

Our Father, &c.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

In the exercise of his charity, Mr. Hervey chose to cloath the poor rather than to give them money ; and he would

Christians in general, especially the members of religious societies, who are in search of ascending to heaven in heart and mind, would do well to have this excellent little book lately published, intitled, "Some regulations and helps * posed for promoting religious conversation among christians;" by the Rev. Mr. Ker of Truro. 'Tis much to be wished that this little piece was well weighed, and generally known—'tis sold by Dilly in the Strand, price two-pence, or twelve sh. per hundred.

get some judicious person to buy linen, coarse cloth, stockings, shoes, &c. for them at the best hand ; alleging, that the poor could not purchase on such good terms what they wanted at the little shops, and with small sums of money. " I am, said he, God's Steward for the poor ; and I must husband the little pittance I have to bestow upon them, " and make it go as far, as possible." But when money would be really serviceable to a family, as to a prudent house keeper, distressed by sickness or misfortunes, he would give five, or more, guineas at a time ; taking care that it should not be known whence the money came. Pope's compliment to Mr. Allen of Bath, might be justly applied to him, who would

Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame.

He was particularly desirous of getting the advice of a Physician (or at least of some judicious apothecary) for the sick poor ; and was ever ready to procure them the very best medicines.—A most beneficial sort of charity to mankind ; and in which it were to be wished, he had many imitators.—He would frequently petition such Physicians of his acquaintance in different parts of the kingdom, as he apprehended thus charitably disposed, to give their advice occasionally, when they rode through a town, to such poor creatures, as the clergyman of the place, or some substantial inhabitant, should recommend, as real objects of compassion.—Mr. Hervey would then with great pleasure, and with as much gratitude to the Physician, as if done to himself, defray the expence of what medicines were wanted. He greatly disapproved of the Clergy's attempting to give medicines to their parishioners ; as he judiciously inferred that, it was impossible for them to do it with the requisite judgement. " Let my brethren, he would say, give them " wine, bread, or beer, and get good spoon meats made " for them : but medicines are of too important a nature to " be given indiscreetly." He observed by his own method the sick poor had the very best medicines, as the Physician saw them himself, and bought them very cheap, because the apothecary knowing they were for charitable uses

charged the Physician for them no more than * prime cost, with some little allowance merely for his trouble in compounding them ; and as the physician knew what diseases were curable, there was no waste of medicines in fruitless attempts to cure cases, which, though actually incurable, persons of less judgement could not pronounce to be so.

He gave away a great number of good books, with suitable instructions for their use ; and especially bibles. In the blank leaf he frequently wrote something capable of making an impression, or else stuck in a printed paper relating to the promises of God, in and through Jesus Christ, or to creation, preservation, and redemption.

All the future profits of his works, he has left to some of the charitable uses above specified, except his *Meditations* ; the copy of which he had sold, after it had passed through several editions ; which sale of the copy, and the profits of the former impressions, amounted to about seven hundred pounds ; all of which he gave away in charity. He said, that it was devoted to God, and that he would on no account apply it to worldly uses ; that he wrote not for profit or fame, but to serve the cause of God ; and as providence had blessed his attempt, he thought himself bound to relieve the distresses of his fellow-creatures with it.

In any expence relating to himself, he was extremely frugal, that he might be liberal to others ; and it was always his desire to die just even with the world, " I will be " my own executor," said he." And as he died on *Christmas* day, his fund expired almost with his life. What little remained, he desired might be given in warm cloathing to the poor in that severe season.

He was indeed too negligent of his dress, which, though it could not in the least lessen the respect paid to him in his own parish and neighbourhood, where he was so well known, yet he would unquestionably have avoided it, if he had lived in a more public scene, where the decency and

* Whenever he solicited the assistance of apothecaries on these charitable occasions, he desired the favour of them to relinquish their usual profits ; promising on that condition, to repay what they might be out of pocket.

propriety of appearance are of much greater* importance.

In learning he was inferior to few. *Greek* was almost as familiar to him as his native language. He was a great master of the classicks; and in the younger part of his life had written some copies of verses, which shewed no contemptible genius for poetry. He had a critical knowledge of the *Hebrew* tongue, and delighted in it.

With respect to his *private* character, he was never known to be in a passion. He lived as in heaven. No *worldly* concerns (though he sometimes met with very trying ones) ever affected him. His humility rendered him invulnerable.—When he was misrepresented and calumniated, he would say, “Our enemies are sometimes our best friends, “and tell us truths; and then we should amend our faults, “and be thankful for such information: and if what they “say be not true, and only spoke through malice, then “such persons are to be considered as diseased in their “minds, and that he would pray for them. They are to “be pitied, says he; and I might as justly be angry with a “man, who is diseased in his body.”

All this he spoke with humility, seriousness, and sweetness; for it was the language of his heart, and not of affectation. In his ordinary transactions with others, he was ever cheerful, punctual, just, and candid to persons of every denomination.

He frequently wrote religious letters to his acquaintance according to their different circumstances, in the most amiable and convincing manner; and he seemed to make it almost an invariable rule, not to write a letter on any occasion, without at least one pious sentence* in it; and that not introduced in a forced and awkward manner, but interwoven so as to appear naturally to arise from the subject: of this kind some specimens may be seen in the note at the bottom of the page †.

* *Nu'lla Dies sine Oratione*—*Nu'lla Epistola sine Christo*, were Mr. Hervey's maxims.

† These specimens are taken from his weekly meditations, or *billets*, to some of his intimate friends;

Of the compliments publicly paid to his piety and genius, it will be sufficient to insert a paragraph from the *Northampton Mercury**, which may be seen at the bottom of the page; and the following Eulogium extracted from a writer † eminent for both these qualities.

Thou *Hervey*, too,
 Whose page and soul alike breathe in sweetest love
 To thy ador'd Redeemer: ~~thou hast shown~~
 That piety and polish'd elegance
 May well together last: and while remains
 Or piety, or elegance, thy works,
 Like genuine gold, the *Touchstone* will abide,
 And grateful to thy countrymen remain †
 Oh! may I to my lowly strains derive
 Some merit from the friendship of thy name;
 Strains, whose exalted subj^t fills thy heart
 So constant with delight; and from thy tongue
 In CONVERSE pours such streams of eloquence,
 That the wrapt hearer wonders at his ~~feats~~
 Of death ere while, and glowing with the joys
 Of *Jesu*, caught from thee, longs to behold
 His Saviour in the clouds: for who can stand
 Amidst the sweetness of *Arabian* groves,
 And not bear thence some fragrance?—Valu'd friend,
 Proceed: and (thy too feeble strength renew'd)

* When I see my dear friend we w^h talk about the contents of his last, my money is Christ's
 † and I only desire that he will give me benevolence to disp^ose of it with equity, discretion
 ‡ to bestow it prudently. I hope you ha^ve quite recovered, and adopted the Psalmist's
 resolution, psalm cxvi. 8 g. What do you think is the meaning of that remarkable
 expression, I will walk before the Lord?

* On Christmas Day in the afternoon died, in the 45th year of his age, the Rev. Mr. James Hervey, Rector of Well-in-Bavell, near Northampton and author of the *Meditations on the Tomb, Flower-Garden, &c.*—He was one of the most eminent instances of the power of christianity upon the human mind—in his ordinary connect^{ions} with the community, he was ever cheerful, and unconsciously punctual in all his dealings, under the severest trials of infirmity for several years he displayed the highest example of fortitude, serenity, patience and entire resignation to the divine will—But, reader, it is not the acquisitions of his understanding, but the improvements of his heart, and his confidence in the great Redeemer, which will now avail the most excellent man.

† See the Rev. Mr. Dodd's poem on the Epiphany, price 1s 6d,

May to hour age thy journey be prolong'd,
And strew'd each step with blessings to mankind!

To the instances of his charity specified in some of the foregoing pages, we may properly add an incident, which, how trifling soever in itself, yet affords a very strong proof, not only of the benevolence of his heart, but of his regard to practical religion, and to the doing of every good work, within his power.

A day or two before his death, when he was reduced to such extreme weakness as to be unable to read, and could with difficulty speak, a little account being settled with him by a friend, on the balance of which he received eighteen shillings; looking on the money with great indifference, he expressed himself to this effect:—"I would gladly dispose of this small sum, in such manner as may do the most good: it is the only act which I now am, and probably the last that I shall be, able to perform. Give yourself the trouble of looking amongst those books, and you will find Mr. *Richards's* pamphlet; at the latter end of which are, I remember, some hints concerning the means of promoting religion in ourselves or others, which, (even with some additions and improvements which you might easily make (will not fill more than a sheet † of paper; and, if struck up or framed, might be particularly useful in that form.—Let then such a number of them be printed and given away, as this money will admit of."—His orders were properly executed—and the evidences of such an angelic temper were equally matter of edification and comfort to his friend, as this charitable legacy, if we may so call it, will be to all, who receive, and rightly use it.

This incident, it is to be hoped, will be candidly considered by those who draw such inferences, from his favourite doctrine and strong expressions of the all-sufficient right-

† The hints &c. which were printed in the single sheet of paper, are subjoined to this account of Mr. Hervey's life.

teachings of Christ, as his whole life did in the most exemplary manner confute. No man had ever a greater disregard for money; which he esteemed unworthy of his notice on any other account, than as it furnished him with the means of doing good. Surely we may here borrow the sentiment and expression * of our celebrated poet, and justly conclude, that

“ He felt his ruling passion strong in death.”

Yet notwithstanding all these irrefragable proofs that Mr. Hervey's opinions (even supposing some of them in their remote consequences were not altogether defensible) had no pernicious influence on so excellent a mind, it is but justice to add, that he guards against the abuses † of the *Antimimus*, though he has too frequently been himself branded with that odious name.—— Nay some of his enemies (for strange as it is, even Mr. Hervey himself, the most inoffensive of men, had enemies) have not scrupled to assert, that “ his tenets were dishonourable to God, subversive of all gospel holiness, destructive even of common morality, and very injurious to society itself, by making men melancholy, and regardless of business.”

These were the very words of an abusive and anonymous letter sent to him by the post; on which, that strict and most excellent man observed to an intimate friend, with all his usual mildness, “ Indeed this gentleman may be said I think to write at random—surely he has never read my works: if I knew where to direct to him, I should desire him to turn to what I have advanced page 124, in the second volume of my *Meditations* ‡, and such a reply I would hope might convince him of his mistake.”

H

* Pope's epistle to Lord Cobham.

† See Vol. II. page 145.

‡ See *Meditations on the Temple*, Vol. II. page 124.

It must be confessed, that many of Mr. *Hervey's* best friends, and some of them too of the *Calvinistic* persuasion, acknowledge, that Mr. *Hervey* has, in some instances, carried those tenets so far, that consequences disadvantageous to religion might be deduced from them:—Consequences, which he himself, instead of assenting to, would have startled at and rejected with abhorrence: for whatever vein of *Calvinism* runs through his writings, yet the weakness of the obligations to purity and holiness of life, was the farthest imaginable from his view. And when persons of judgment have pointed out to him some expressions as were liable to be misunderstood in that respect, he always disavowed any such meaning, and affirmed, that the fault was not in the evangelical doctrines so much insisted on by him, but in the misapprehension, ignorance or inattention of those, who abused them to licentiousness.——He would then add, he was ready to alter or retract any sentiment or expression which he apprehended to be really objectionable; but that to make things equally clear to every one's apprehension, or to have the same effect upon every one's mind, was an impracticable attempt;—that he professed himself a moderate * *Calvinist*, and that consequently the *Arminians* would not reject some things he had advanced, though what he wrote was exactly (as he thought) conformable to the church articles, which he said were *Calvinistic*; yet he hoped they would not reject the whole of his writings, because they could not in every point concur with him; and that they might in general be useful, how much soever some of his particular opinions might be doubted or censured.

A very candid and eminent physician, who knew Mr. *Hervey* well, has thus delivered his sentiments in a letter, written soon after Mr. *Hervey's* decease, to another physician, who was their common friend.

“He was one of the best men that has existed for a century: but I apprehend, though I am not a competent judge of theological niceties, and the perplexing distinctions in this age of disputes, that he carried his *Calvinis-*

"tical principles too far.—However, it is not the head but
 "the heart, which will avail us at the grand tribunal.—I
 "do not mean, that Mr. *Hervey* was deficient in point of
 "understanding;—that be far from me: But I think our
 "various sentiments in speculative points (how important
 "soever some men may take them to be) are really all mere
 "Bagatelles; and I have long observed, that disputes
 "about these things and the practice of religion seldom go
 "together.—I think, that men of the most exalted sense,
 "learning and penetration, such as *Bacon*, *Locke*, and *Newton*,
 "were very cheap in the estimation of angels.—The fact
 "is this:—Understanding, like wealth, is the gift of God:
 "—'Tis not the acquisition, but the improvement*, that,
 "through Christ, will stand us in any stead hereafter.—
 "Now according to our blessed Lord's own account of the
 "grand assize (peculiarly set forth by St. *Matthew*, in the
 "xxvth chapter of his gospel, beginning at the 31st verse)
 "no man, agreeably to human judgment, will stand a bet-
 "ter chance at that awful solemnity, than ~~of late~~ ^{of late} worthy
 "Ecclesiastic:—Who, by the by, suspected me perhaps
 "for a *Socinian*; but I can assure you, 'tis not the faith,
 "which I have adopted."

The reasons for publishing the present collection of Mr.
Hervey's Letters, were the strong solicitation of those who
 knew and valued the author and his writings; a design of
 contributing to the interests of religion, which was the great
 scope of all his labours, Nor will it be, it is presumed, ne-
 cessary to bespeak the candour of the reader, or deprecate
 the petulance of criticism, whatever defects or inaccuracies
 may be found in a work of this kind, not intended for the
 public eye, though well deserving of it.

* See the parable of the talents, *Matth* xxv.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT was once intended by the Editor, to have published these letters in the same order in which they were wrote; but though that method has been observed as far as was practicable, there was no possibility of doing it exactly, for the following reasons. 1st, Mr. Hervey, in many letters written to those with whom he kept a frequent correspondence, was accustomed to express neither month nor year, but only to write *Monday morning, Tuesday night, &c.* 2 ly, Several letters were transmitted to the editor, with the dates as well as names erased; and 3d ly, some were sent after the order had been settled, and others of a subsequent date were printed off; these therefore, were of necessity to be inserted where they could.

It may farther be necessary to observe, that there are a few things inserted in this collection of Mr. Hervey's letters, (such as * the cottager's letter; Mr. † Boyle's; the letter to † Dr. T * * ; and the rules of the Truro & society.) which were introduced, not only from the great propriety of such an introduction, but at the particular desire of some of Mr. Hervey's friends, in order to fulfil his intentions, and render him, though dead, as extensively useful as possible.

" I would by all means (says one of his most judicious and favourite correspondents) have that letter of mine,

* See Vol. I. Page 169.

† See Vol. III. Page 425.

‡ Vol. I. Page 25.

§ Vol. II. Page 69.

“ addressed to Dr. T * *, printed in the collection ; as I
 “ think this may in some measure be fulfilling the will of
 “ my deceased friend, who appears by his own letter * to
 “ me to have judged something of that nature *highly neces-*
 “ *sary* ; and he certainly would have attempted it himself,
 “ as he declared, had not a certain church preferment
 “ brought him very unexpectedly into a connection, which
 “ made such a publication at that juncture ineligible.—
 “ Mr. Hervey is now dead, and that reason is no longer in
 “ force ; and therefore, now seems to be the fittest time
 “ for such purpose. I wrote that letter to Dr. T * * at
 “ Mr. Hervey’s express desire, and I gave him full power
 “ to make what use of it he pleased ; hoping, that after
 “ correcting it to his mind, he would have sent it to Dr.
 “ T * * himself ; or else that he would have wrote in
 “ another form (perhaps in an introduction to his fast ser-
 “ mons) something far more valuable, extracting from my
 “ letter what best answered his ends ; but that not being
 “ done, the publication of my letter in this collection, im-
 “ mediately after what Mr. Hervey says in his to me †
 “ about Dr. T * *’s sermon, may, with the same divine
 “ blessing, be of use ; and though of little worth, yet like
 “ the widow’s mite, when it was her all, it may be accept-
 “ able.—There are thousands of preachers who think in
 “ the same way with Dr. T * *, and very likely many of
 “ these may be the readers of Mr. Hervey’s letters : and
 “ if some of them reflect and reform, the unjust anger of
 “ the rest is very little to be regarded : therefore upon the
 “ most serious consideration, it is my earnest request, that
 “ the letter to Dr. T * * should be printed just as I sent it
 “ to Mr. Hervey.

“ There was ‡ a design I heard, of getting the folio edi-
 “ tion of *Downham’s Christian Warfare, against the Devil,*
 “ *the World, and the flesh,* reprinted in three 8vo, or two

• Vol. II. Letter XX.

† To be printed as here desired.

‡ The design here mentioned, would have been executed by a subscription of six per-
 sons, but one of them dying, and another going to reside abroad, it was abandoned.

410 volumes — I fear it is dropped; which is a great pity, as it is a most excellent performance; perhaps, one of the best books we have in divinity; and the language remarkably pure, considering it was written in Queen Elizabeth's time. — What highly advances the value of it is, that very little has been done in this way, either before or since, and the book is now grown extremely scarce. But here I must inform you, that the edition which Mr. Hervey procured (for I strongly recommended it to him on various accounts) is not near so good as mine; and how much my fourth edition is improved, Mr. Davenant himself tells best in his preface to the third and fourth editions, the last of which was printed in 1684."

Having been encouraged (says he) by several no less godly than judicious, and not a little comforted in myself, that through God's blessing, I have been the means of comforting others, I was the more willing in this third edition, to review my labours for the further benefit of the public; and not only to purge them from many faults, which escaped in the two former impressions, but also to add some things which seemed wanting in them.

"You see then my edition is the best, in the author's own opinion: and therefore I mention this, lest any new edit on should be printed from that in the custody of Mr. Hervey's executors."

Letter XV. Page 44. Vol. I. the reader will observe is imperfect, and that the beginning refers to a former part: it that part be yet extant, the editor (who is desirous of perfecting this letter in the next edition) would be much obliged to the possessor, if he would transmit it to Mr. Hervey's mother at Weston Favell near Northampton; to his brother Mr. William Hervey, Wine Merchant in Miles's Lane, London; or to Mr. John Rivington, Bookseller in St Paul's

the value of this book sufficiently known, it would probably sell in the fashionable way of weekly numbers, especially if properly abridged (which would require no small judgment).

Church-Yard.—The original shall be carefully returned, as all the others have been, pursuant to the directions given to the editor.—The names of such persons and their abode have been omitted when desired to be erased, so that no discovery can be made to the prejudice of any of Mr. Hervey's correspondents.

In letter XXI. Vol. I. is an injunction from the author, to return that letter to himself; which was accordingly done, by the person to whom it was entrusted. After Mr. Hervey's death being found in his study, and given with several other of his letters to the editor, it was debated whether it should be suppressed, or not?—But it was determined in the negative, as the author could not now be drawn into any controversy on the occasion; the apprehension of which was the principal reason, which induced him to desire its return.



ON THE

REV. MR. JAMES HERVEY'S PICTURE,

*By the Reverend Mr. JOHN NIXON, A. M. Rector of Cold Hanham
in Northamptonshire,*

WILLIAMS ! 'Tis yours to bid the canvass wear,
By art illusive, HERVEY's form and wit.
Oh ! with like happy labour could I trace,
Each virtue, each exalted christian grace,
Each heavenly gift, with which his soul was blest,
And fix the bright assemblage in my breast :
Then how transcendent f'r wou'd be my plan,
You paint his mimic SHADE :—I'd live the MAN.

Hints concerning the means of promoting religion in our
selves or others.*

I.

BE always chearful as well as serious, that you
may win men to christianity. And in every conversation
introduce some religious hints, if it can be done with pro-
priety.

I

II.

Avoid all controversies ; no good can come from disputing ; but contend earnestly for the essentials of christianity.

III.

Heal all divisions amongst sects and parties to the utmost of your power.—And prevail with those who are most fiery to read *Henry's excellent* treatise on *Meekness*.

IV.

Talk *familiarly* to children about religion, as a delightful employment. Put easy questions to them—encouraging them occasionally by some little presents—and thus teaching them an amiable, cheerful, generous piety.

V.

Make it a constant rule to pray for all who affront or injure you.—Christ injoins us to pray for all who despitefully use us. See *Matt. v. 44*. Disregard all opprobrious names.—Christ himself (as will every one who strives against the corrupt prejudices and vices of mankind) was abused as a Wine-bibber, and even a blasphemer, &c.

VI.

Be accustomed to a regular, daily, but moderate course of devout retirement : and recommend intercession for others, both in the family and in private.—As likewise frequent attendance at the sacrament.

VII.

Frequent public worship constantly, and conscientiously.

VIII.

Secret ejaculations too may be used as you are walking, or riding, or in whatever company you may happen to be—and, on *some particular* hour, remember (as for instance, at morning, noon, afternoon, or evening, when your Town-Clock strikes, which will be a loud and never-failing memorandum) to set yourself as in the presence of God * for a few minutes.

IX.

Use frequent *meditation*, than which nothing can be more profitable : nor can any thing so much awaken and dispose us for that, and for all that is good; than a strong faith in providence, and a constant cheerfulness of spirit.

X.

Entertain the highest regard for the word of God, and furnish yourself with a few of the best writers, but particularly with *Henry* on meekness, and *li'orthington* on resurrection.—Study them thoroughly, and endeavour to make their sentiments your own. Meekness and resurrection are the two principal duties of a christian.—Disperse good books occasionally, if your circumstances will permit—and be very careful in the choice of them, and in adapting them to the circumstances of the person to whom they are given.

XI.

Encourage by your influence, and pure (if able) societies for promoting the gospel, both at home and in foreign parts; and, in order to be well acquainted with these, read Dr. *Woodward's Rise and Progress of the religious Societies in London and Westminster*, Price 1 s. published

* This method is thus recommended by the late bishop of Down Dr. L. . . . charge to the clergy 1741.

ed (as I am informed) by the special command of her late Majesty Queen Anne.

XII.

Whenever you reprove, let it be tenderly, privately and with all due humility.

XIII.

For the reformation of swearing *, lying, slandering, sabbath-breaking, passionate or unchaste persons, you may write out (or keep by you some printed) hints on slips of paper, against either of these vices, and place them in the way of such persons, either by putting them into their books, windows, or other places, provided you don't care to give them to the person yourself,—or they may be sent by the post † from or to the metropolis.

XIV.

Make it a rule to have *at least one* religious sentence in the letters you write to your relations or friends, when it can be *conveniently* introduced; as such a sentence, *properly* interwoven, often strikes the reader; and is productive of more real good, perhaps, than a laboured discourse from the pulpit, or formal advice at home.

* Give to a twearer the late bishop of London's (Dr. Gibson) admonition against profane and common swearing, 7th Edition, price three-half-pence.

† The following letter was sent by the post to a libertine, who professed himself a deist, and it was in some degree the cause of his reformation.

SIR,

Though you disbelieve Christianity, I cannot suppose that you disbelieve a future state of rewards and punishments; please therefore to take it into serious consideration, whether you think your actions are such, as will, upon your own principles, stand the test at the great day of account.

As it highly becomes us to do what good we can while we live in this world; and as I am truly concerned for you, I take the liberty of giving this friendly hint; and hope you will receive it as a proof, that the writer, though unknown, is

Your very sincere well-wisher,

N. Z.

XV.

Guard those over whom you have any influence, against enthusiasm, and excessive rigours, either as to abstinence, retirement, or conversation; and advise them to take all the comfort, that the situation, in which God has placed them, can give; reminding them at the same time, to acknowledge him in all their ways, and to be *discreetly* † *zealous* for the honor of Christ.—Réposing an entire confidence in the wisdom, power, and goodness of God; and assuring themselves of the extent of his providence (of which we know not either the value or power) to all his creatures, and to all their actions.

XVI.

But above all, write down the reasons which at any time make you afraid to die, and then endeavour by repentance, faith, prayer, and conversation with experienced christians, to remove the causes,—and thus be properly *preparing* for death: and, if your time and capacity will admit, keep a short **DIARY**: particularly note your sins of omission—and by this method you will see your progress or declension in religion.

The following imitation of Mr. Hervey's Meditations is very ingenious, and was wrote by a young Lady (in 1750). It was presumed it would be acceptable to the reader, and is therefore here inserted previous to the collection, as it could not properly be printed in it.

THE shortning days, the sullen clouds, grown dark and ponderous with the gathering rain; the frigid air,

† A certain zealot being warned against impairing the cause of Christ by his imprudences, despised the caution, and alleged, "that PAUPERISM was at best but a rancidly virtuous thing."

which strikes unwelcome on the tender frame (but shews what *Albion's* sons could once endure, proclaim the approach of winter.—See! how the trees, as though they felt a shock like human dissolution, now drop their leafy honors:—Some, you may observe, like feeble old age, hang tottering in the air, till a gentle breeze breaks the tender fibre that supports them, and throws them rentless on the ground. They fall unlamented, when they can no longer delight our eyes; and are no sooner dissolved, than forgot: their beauty continues one summer only: how transitory! whilst the lofty fir, though greatly eclipsed by these gay strangers in the bloom of their youth, yet far exceeds them in the *duration* of her charms. The beauty of the fir are always the same, and perish only with her existence.

A lively emblem this, of the inability and worthlessness of mortal charms:—How mutable is the happiness of those thoughtless women, who place all their felicity in admiration!—Admiration, from whom? Not from the wise and prudent, that were well worth their aim; but from persons light and trifling as themselves: for such alone pay court to polished dust.—Perhaps, they pass the bloom of their youth without one serious thought; and what a fund of impertinence do they then treasure up for the remainder of their days! which, [when all these gay fantastic visions fade, when every outward charm is fled, grows quite insupportable.—How can they bear the shock of approaching age? which (like autumn by the trees) distobs them of every attractive grace.—The perfections we are by the flattering world allowed, whilst we have beauty, too often, at least the praise of them, vanish with it, and leave nothing but malice and envy to fill up the great void of uncultivated sense:—They drop, like the withered leaves, neglected if not despised; and like the path of a swift arrow through the invisible air, leave no traces of virtue or goodness, whereby they may be remembered.—How much happier they, who in the midst of their childish, innocent amusements, experience the effects of a true parental care; who are taught to “remember their creator in the days of their youth, while the evil days come not, and the years wherein they shall (truly) say, I have no pleasure in them;”

and are early informed before the trifling joys of this world have made too deep an impression on their tender minds; that all is vanity; that religion, wisdom, and virtue, are the only permanent enjoyments in this world, and will be their only consolation when they sink into another: Beauty is no farther of advantage to us than as it is an embellishment to sense, and makes virtue appear more amiable; but when it is only a mask to vice or folly, when it persuades the owner to neglect the attainment of all other accomplishments, the blessing then degenerates into a curse, and we quickly despise the idle flatterer; in short, "the praise that is worth ambition is attained by good sense alone with a vigility of mind," and a woman of true sense will be always ambitious,—not of gaining admiration, but of deserving it.

I am now myself obliged to Mr Hervey's Meditations, for the perfectionation of him. The two volumes published under that title cannot, I think, be sufficiently admired: His reflections are so easy and natural, that, upon reading them, you cannot help being surprized; that the objects which furnished him with these beautiful ideas, did not in the same manner affect you upon the like occasions, till you consider the dignity of style in which they are wrote.—You are then immediately convinced that this is only to be attained by a bright understanding, refined by a liberal education.—I can't, for my own part, conceive any thing (in this world) to be more thoroughly conducive to happiness than such a genius, where every object round him raises his admiration, and excites his thankfulness to that being, whose blessings he only truly enjoys, who PROPERLY esteems them; there is nothing such as one behold, but what he can apply to the good of himself, and of his fellow-creatures.

* There are few books in the English language, which in so short a time have ever passed through such numerous and very large editions (four thousand at an impression) as Mr. Hervey's Meditations, which not only please, but improve us, and give wisdom with pleasure, by familiarizing to our minds those sublime objects, which will be the support and delight of a glorious hereafter.

How many have they transportingly entertained in their retirements and lonely walks, and how often elevated them to those lofty heights, from whence they could look down on all things below (the delights of good men's fellowship excepted) with an easy indifference.

A
SUPPLEMENT
TO THE
REVEREND MR. HERVEY'S LIFE,

BY THE

Reverend Mr. ———, the Editor.

IN the life of Mr. *Hervey*, which was wrote by Dr *Birch*, secretary to the royal society, and rector of *St. Margaret Patten* in *London*, (for whose use many of the materials were collected, as he was an entire stranger to Mr *Hervey*) there is no mention made of him from his first entrance into orders in 1736, till his taking the living in 1752. It is necessary therefore to acquaint the public, that neither *Birch*, nor the editor Mr. M——— had then sufficient materials to fill up such an interval: but, as several particulars relating to that period have been communicated to the editor since the life was printed; and as some important remarks will arise from them, it was thought proper, for the farther satisfaction of the reader, to add those by way of supplement.

Yet this was not the only inducement to the writing of this supplement; for it appears necessary to inform the reader, that although the editor of this work undertook the publication on the condition of being concealed, yet he

thinks himself obliged, in conscience, to declare (as the life was written by a gentleman to him unknown, who resides wholly in London, and as he never saw it before it went to the press) that there are some expressions in the life, particularly in page ix. as also a note inserted at the bottom of page 55, the second volume, to illustrate what is advanced in page ix. of which he, the editor, disapproves; at it is therein hinted to the reader, that, notwithstanding all that has been said and wrote concerning free-grace, imputed righteousness, &c. by Mr. Hervey, and his admired Mr. Marshall, yet there is an excellent work of bishop Fowler's lately republished, which obviates the tendency, or misapplication of their principles.—It has indeed been there suggested, by way of reply, in the following words; “that Mr. Hervey, desired to see a treatise (or sermon) on the subject of true holiness,—its nature,—its necessity,—and of its excellency written by some author of elegance and spirit, that he might display their arguments, and point out the expeditious and easy way to all the noble qualities, and important duties, which constitute the dignity, or happiness of human nature, upon Mr. Marshall's plan.”—Hence appears Mr. Hervey's impartial zeal for vital holiness, which constitutes a shining part of his character:—And it was necessary to urge, as it fully vindicates Mr. Hervey from any tendency towards *Antinomianism*.—It has been further said, that in Vol. II. page 234, his zeal for truth, independent of any person, or system, appears by his desire to be informed, “how Mr. Marshall's method might be improved, that he might have an opportunity of acknowledging Mr. Marshall's mistakes, and cautioning his readers: that if Mr. Hervey himself admitted, some caution might possibly be necessary to the readers of Mr. Marshall's treatise on *sanctification*, which he held in such high esteem, the writer of his life is so far from being liable to censure for giving the same caution, or for any reference to it, that he might have been more justly so, had he omitted it:—That he thereby had an opportunity shewing, that Mr. Hervey's regard to truth was superior to all other considerations:—And that, where the interests of re-

ligion were concerned, the excellent person, whose life he writes, was himself greatly superior to all bigotry and prejudice; qualities which his enemies, if any such he had, would not fail to impute to him.—It has been still further suggested, that in all impartial accounts of lives, what ever had been, or might be alledged against the party, either truly or plausibly, should never be concealed, but every aspersion either wiped off, or guarded against, as far as is consistent with truth.—And lastly, that any apparent or supposed difference of opinion between Mr. *Hervey*, and the writer of his life, does the greater honour to the former, whose worth is not only acknowledged, but professedly published to the world, by a person who had no bias towards those tenets which Mr. *Hervey* is presumed to have espoused:—Tenets relating to such intricate points, as the most eminently learned and pious writers could never yet wholly reconcile; and which, after all that can be said, or wrote about them, must, in all human probability, remain undetermined to the end of the world.—Still it is to be hoped, that the reasonable, and truly pious on both sides of the question, (I mean such as totally disclaim, and even abhor, the doctrines of *Antinomianism*, on the one side; and of *merit by works* on the other) may, upon every cool and charitable conference, find their sentiments nearer to each other, and their differences much less than is generally imagined.—Nor can any one deny, that there have been excellent men on both sides of the question, who are now equally happy in the kingdom of God.

As I have thus published these suggestions in the very words which were delivered to me, I hope I may take the liberty, without giving any offence, of proclaiming, that nothing which can be alledged in defence of this intimation of a difference between the sentiments of Mr. *Hervey*, and the writer of his life, can in any degree either affect mine, with regard to the evangelical and unrefragable doctrine of Christ's imputed and all-sufficient righteousness; or can prevent my hearty wishes, that the opinions of the writer of Mr. *Hervey's* life, and his esteem for such doctrines, as Mr

Hervey would himself most strenuously * have opposed had not been thus introduced; because the impropriety of recommending *Mr. Hervey* and his writings by insinuations, tending in any degree to depreciate those doctrines, which raised him to so high a pitch of christian excellence; and which it was, at once, the labour and delight of his whole life to propagate and defend, must be obvious to every reader:—And I must further declare my full persuasion, that neither the opinions of *Mr. Hervey*, nor the points to which they relate, are so intricate, or untelligible as they are represented; but that to a studious and sincere peruser of the holy scriptures, they are capable of the clearest conception, and the most satisfactory proof.—Many, who dissent from *Mr. Hervey*, have not, perhaps, prayed to God for illumination, or taken the pains to be acquainted with the grounds of his tenets, and therefore ventured rashly to pronounce them absurd.—Now, some have not scrupled boldly to assert they are so absurd, that no man of sense could in good earnest give into them; notwithstanding all our reformers, men eminent for sense and piety, have embraced the same tenets as *Mr. Hervey* has done.

I now proceed to the mention of such occurrences, as were not known to the writer of *Mr. Hervey's* life; in order to gratify, as far as I am able, the desires of those, who wish to be informed of the most minute † particulars, relating to the life and conduct of so celebrated, so exemplary a person.—Whilst *Mr. Hervey* was at *Lincoln-College*, he had a small exhibition of about twenty pounds a year; and, when he was ordained, his father prest him very much to take some curacy, in or near *Oxford*, and to hold his exhibition; but with this he would by no means comply, thinking it an injustice to detain it after he was in orders, from another person, who might more want the benefit of that

* See *Mr. Hervey's* character of bishop *Fowler's* design of christianity, Vol. II.

† “ ‘Twas for this very reason, that his childish diversions, (see page v. of his life) how trifling soever it may seem to some, were so particularly noticed.—By them we discover in him not only a dexterity, but a manly disposition, which, even at that time of life, made him quite indifferent about the boyish acquisitions, of which the generality of children are as tenacious, as the most voracious infant can be of his treasure.”

provision: after mentioning this circumstance, some perhaps may think it strange; that he should accept of the two livings of *Weston-Farrell* and *Collingtree*, and hold them during his life. But we can assure the reader, that it was very far from being his *choice*, and it was what he had for a long time *refused* to do. He was determined against being a pluralist, and notwithstanding his father kept him at *Oxford*, with a design, that he should take his degree of Master of Arts, and constantly urged him to do it, yet he could not be persuaded to yield to such a request, though he was of a sufficient standing to have took the same, looking upon that step as a qualification intended for his future holding *both* his father's livings. When his father died, he remained determined to have *Weston-Farrell* only; and this he frequently declared to his family and friends, and refused to accept of *Collingtree*, or to qualify himself for the same; in so much, that it was in danger of lapsing to the Bishop; but at length, through the earnest and constant intreaties of his family, and of his friends, who, unknown to him, had sent to, and procured from Oxford the necessary certificates of his being a Bachelor of Arts, in order to his taking his master's degree at Cambridge, he was, after much importunity, prevailed on to comply with their requests, hoping, that he might be thereby enabled to do so much the more good. And when he waited upon Dr. Thomas, the then Bishop of Peterborough, for institution to *Collingtree*, which was near six months after he had been inducted into *Weston*, he said to him, "I suppose your Lordship will be surprised to see James Hervey come to desire your Lordship to permit him to be a pluralist; but I assure you, I do it to satisfy the repeated solicitations of my mother and my sister, and not to please myself," or to that effect.

When he left Oxford in 1736, he went to his father, and was his curate; and afterwards he went to London, where he staid some time: he then was curate at Dummer, where he continued about twelve months, and upon his leaving that curacy, in the year 1738*, he was invited and went to

Stoke-Abbey, in Devonshire, the seat of his worthy friend, the late Paul Orchard, Esq. Here he lived upwards of two years, in great esteem and friendship with that worthy gentleman, who valued him very much for his piety. A remarkable proof of the great regard he had for him on that account, he shewed on the following occasion: When his eldest son, the present Paul Orchard, Esq. to whom the second Volume of his *Meditations* is dedicated, was to be baptised, he insisted, that Mr. Hervey should be one of his godfathers, that he might have an eye to his christian education; and this he did in preference to many gentlemen of large estates in that neighbourhood, who would have thought themselves honored to have stood sponsors for Mr. Orchard's son.

In the year 1740, he undertook the curacy of *Biddesford*, fourteen miles from *Stoke-Abbey*, where he lived greatly beloved by his people; his congregation was large, though his stipend was small; his friends, therefore, made a collection yearly for him, which raised his income to 60*l.* per *Ann.* so highly did they esteem him. At *Biddesford* he was curate about two years and an half, and remained so until there was a new rector of that church, (his rector being dead) who dismissed Mr. *Hervey* from his curacy, against the united requests of his parishioners, who offered to maintain him at their own expence. During the time, that Mr. *Hervey* lived in the west, viz. from the year 1738, until his return to *Weston-Fawell*, the latter end of the year 1745, his family heard very little of him, by reason of the great distance he was from them; although without doubt, he laboured diligently in the service of his master. Here it was that he planned his *Meditations*, and probably wrote some part of them, but these particulars are not as yet come to our knowledge: he says, in his first volume of *Meditations*, that it was on a ride to *Kilhampton*, in *Corwall*, that he went into the church, where he lay the scene of his *Meditations among the Tombs*.

In August 1745, or thereabouts, he returned from *Biddesford* * to *Weston-Fawell*, leaving behind him many discon-

* See Vol. I. Letter 4. Cited from Bath, in his return from *Biddesford*.

solate friends, and officiated as curate to his father, until June 1750, at which time his health was much impaired by his great attention to duty; and his family and friends, judging that the change of air, might be of benefit to him, they formed a design, which they executed, of conveying him to London, under a pretence of his riding a few miles in a friend's post-chaise, who was going thither, and of which he pleasantly complains in a letter * to a friend upon his arrival there.

He staid in London from June 1750, until April or May 1752, during which time he was visited with a severe sickness, which had well-nigh put a period to his painful life; but he recovered, and upon his father's death in 1752, he returned to *Wotton*, where he constantly resided until Christmas 1759, when he died.

It must be acknowledged, that some of his first letters written from college when he was not more than twenty years of age, either speak a language *different from free grace*, for which we find he was afterwards so powerful an advocate, or at the least they treat *very confusedly* of it; and perhaps some may say, why then were they printed? For these two plain reasons, that the reader may see and know what early and strong impressions he had of piety! what love to God! and to his fellow-creatures!—Though we say not that like *John Baptist*, he was sanctified from his mother's womb, yet his very early labours for his Saviour, when too many others of his age and standing, were captivated by their passions, and swallowed up by their lusts, prove to a demonstration, the doctrine he afterwards taught. viz. the power of redeeming love: they shew how early the seeds of grace were sown in his heart; and when they look forward, they may observe from what small sparks of light and grace the holy spirit hath gradually taught him, and led him, as it were by the hand, into the full and holy liberty of the children of God. When but twenty-one

* Vol. 1. Letter 2. 111.

* *Illustrations*. John vi. 45.

years of age, we find him afraid of praise and flying from it, when others would be courting it: for having wrote some verses to a relation which were greatly commended, he heartily wishes * he never had wrote a line of poetry in his life: and he wrote upon another occasion expressly blaming a friend for praising him; and again page 229. he says, "you have paid me an obliging compliment; beg of the blessed God, dear Sir, that I may not be puffed up with vain conceit of myself, or my writings."

From the reading of these familiar letters, which is in a manner listening to the writer, and hearing his inuents, we may learn, that by nature, "his heart was hard as the flint, and his hands tenacious even to avarice," those are the words.—Yet, (see the power of that free grace, which living and dying he adored) he became a bright example of universal charity.

His great humility and diffidence of his own judgement and learning, appear in many of his letters, in one, which is far from being contemptible either for style or argument, he enjoins his friend to return his letter immediately to him, that it might never appear, yet his friend got the better of that modesty and obtained leave to keep it, to which is owing the publication of that now, which Mr. Hervey at the time of writing it, desired might never see the light.

Another instance, and a striking one, we may meet with, in Vol I. where answering the objections of a lady to the miracle which Christ wrought at the marriage of Cana in Galilee, he says, "I have neither sense of mind nor solidity of judgement, sufficient to conduct the procedure of an argument, &c."

As the love of God was shed abroad in his heart, it produced an ardent desire to promote the cause of Christ Jesus and his religion. And when he found himself bowed down with the spirit of weakness and infirmity, he was apt to fear lest he should disgrace the gospel in his languishing moment †; he earnestly prayed to God, and desired others

* Vol. I. Letter III.

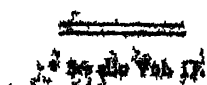
† Vol. I.

to unite in the same petition, that he might not thus *dishonour* the cause of CHRIST. And *his*, and *their* prayers were heard; for, notwithstanding his lingering weakness and dearest spirits, which at length gave him up into the hands of death, yet he triumphed over his fears, he triumphed over the grand tempter and adversary of souls.

His willingness to have his writings corrected, by every judicious friend, and his thankfulness in receiving their criticisms, appear through out all his letters written to his learned correspondents, a specimen of it you may see, Vol. I. page 226*. His earnest desire to prefer his friend's opinion to his own, or in other words, his humble opinion of his own judgment and powers in argumentation, makes him constantly requesting, "pray use freely the pruning hook," &c. It may seem a wonder, therefore, that he should ever undertake discouraging thoughts of himself, write at all, especially so much as he has done, considering he was not more than five and forty when he died, and that the first of his works was published when he was thirty-three—Perhaps the reader might be almost tempted to suspect, that his humility was affected, and that pride lurked under that fair garment—but hypocrisy dwelt not in him, he wrote under all that weakness, and under all those fears, because he dared not be silent, the cause of God and truth was publicly attacked, the cause of his master was opposed, and he, as a faithful watchman, was compelled, however weak in body, however unequal he thought himself to the task, he was compelled to cry aloud and spare not, and therefore he wrote not from pride, or from avarice, but from conscience, and a sense of duty, and thus the intelligent and candid reader will easily perceive from many of his letters.

At a time when infidelity and depravity prevailed, and when it was become almost fashionable to slander and speak evil of persons; depreciating another's reputation in order

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to raise or establish our own, we find Mr. *Hervey* making it a rule to single out the best things he had heard of, his neighbour, and carefully avoiding even to hint any thing which might be the cause of propagating a rumour † to his detriment; or to disclose a secret, which might be injurious to him: thus careful was he to carry into his own practice the doctrine he taught, the religion he profess, — and thus far was he from espousing either the principles or practices of *Antinomians*: his pretended friends, however, of that stamp, as well as his adversaries, have taken much pains to make the world believe, that he in all things agreed with them, that, if possible, they might be thought not to differ from him; but they will find it as impracticable to raise their reputation upon his, as it will be to reduce his character to a level with their own, so long as his works shall live to proclaim his principles, and a friend shall remain to declare his truly Christian practices, his holy life and conversation.

It cannot but be observed, that Mr. *Hervey* in two of his letters *, has repeated the same argument ‡ in pretty near the same words, and perhaps this repetition may disgust the delicate and curious reader, especially as it returns so soon as within the compass of thirty pages, but it is to be considered, that although the letters follow so close, they were written at different times; the one to a clergyman at *Batu* in 1743, and the other for the satisfaction of a lady five years afterwards; and as the objections were the same from both, Mr. *Hervey* had a right to return each of them the same answer; and the reason of their being printed so near together was, because the letter of the earliest date came not to our hands till after the other was printed off; and because the editor could not prevail with himself to leave so valuable a letter as the latter out of the present collection.

Mr. *Hervey*, Vol. II. Letter XCVI. page 377. has quoted a passage from Dr. *Barnes's First Happiness of Man* :—

* Vol. I. and Vol. II.

* Vol. I. Letter XLVIII, and Vol. II. Letter I.

A tract, which was at first published as a complete piece by itself, in a thin octavo volume : but some time afterwards the doctor wrote on the four last things, viz. death, judgment, heaven, and hell ; and then wove that former tract, into this latter work : so that the same quotation, as mentioned by Mr. *Hervey* to have been extracted from this tract, entitled, *The final Happiness of Man*, will likewise be found in the duodecimo edition of Dr. *Bates's Four last Things*, page 175 ; and in the folio edition of all his works, page 466.

I must once more trespass on my reader's patience, as I cannot conclude without expressing my hopes, that every person of candour and judgment will make the necessary allowances for those different states, both of body and mind, which one of Mr. *Hervey's* weak constitution must have undergone in the space of five and twenty years*, during which, these letters were wrote.—No one I am sure is more justly intitled to the indulgence of the public, than *he*, whose letters are here collected.

* Namely from 1733, to 1762.



A

VINDICATION

OF THE

REVEREND JAMES HERVEY,

*From the Aspersions, occasioned by some particulars in the
Supplement to his Life.*

IN the supplement to the Life of the Reverend Mr. James Hervey, prefixed to his Letters, there are some mistakes in point of fact : two of them of so important a kind, as to afford an occasion for some very severe remarks upon him in the Gentleman's Magazine, August 1760. See page 370. Justice to truth, to the public, and to the memory of so excellent a man, makes it necessary to represent those facts in a true and adequate light, as such a representation will be a full vindication of him ; and as the clergyman * of the adjoining parish, an intimate friend of the family, is ready to avow, and attest what is here advanced. An apology on this occasion to Mr. M——, the writer of the Supplement is entirely needless, as he, from the same zeal for truth and for the character of the late pious and amiable deceased, cannot but be highly pleased to see himself set right with regard to such mistakes, as he was undesignedly led into, merely for want of more exact information, having

* Namely the Rev. Mr. Willis, Rector of Little Billing, near Northampton—a Gentleman of unquestionable veracity, and much respected in that neighbourhood.

received his intelligence from a cursory enquiry of Mr. Hervey's mother, whose advanced years may excuse any little defects in her memory ; and her daughter being then in Berkshire.

But previous to any animadversions on the Supplement, it cannot be improper, for the sake of accuracy, though in particulars of much less consequence, to take this opportunity of correcting two passages in the life itself, written by Dr Birch. The first is p. vi. where Mr. Hervey is said to have resided in the university (of Oxford) seven years. But his residence there appears not to have been above five. The other is in p. vii. where, as well as in the Supplement, it seems to be implied, that upon his entrance into Holy Orders, he became Curate to his own Father, whereas, he went immediately after his Ordination, to officiate in that capacity at *Donner in Hampshire* *.

To proceed to the chief object about which the public has this trouble. In the Supplement, is the following passage :

" While Mr. Hervey was at Lincoln College, he had a
 " small exhibition of about 20l. a year ; and when he was
 " ordained, his father pressed him very much to take some
 " curacy, in or near Oxford, and to hold his exhibition ;
 " but this he would by no means comply with, thinking it
 " an injustice to detain it after he was in Orders, from ano-
 " ther person who might more want the benefit of that
 " provision : After mentioning this circumstance, some,
 " perhaps, may think it strange, that he should accept the
 " two livings of Weston and Collingtree, and hold them
 " during his life. But we can assure the reader, that it was
 " very far from being his choice ; and it was what for a
 " long time he refused to do. He was determined against
 " being a pluralist, and notwithstanding his father kept him
 " at Oxford, with a design that he should take his degree
 " of Master of Arts, and constantly urged him to do it,
 " yet he could not be persuaded to yield to such a

"request"; though he was of a sufficient standing to have
 "took the same; looking upon that step as a qualification
 intended for his future holding both his father's liv-
 "ings."

The real state of this fact is thus delivered upon the knowledge of Mr. Hervey's friend, the rector of Little Billing, referred to above.

Soon after Mr. Hervey was entered of *Lincoln College*, he was, by the favour of Dr. *Eusebius Isham*, the worthy rector, appointed to one of the exhibitions of 20*l.* per Annu^m founded in that college, by that munificent encourager of learning, *Nathaniel Lord Crew*, bishop of *Durham*; the benefit of which he enjoyed, till entering into orders † under Dr. *John Potter*, then bishop of *Oxford*, he immediately took his name out of the college book, and retired to a curacy at *Drumcrin* in *Downshire*. He left his exhibition therefore, of course, not for any scruple of conscience, as looking on it as a plurality, but because he could not hold it any longer. He went to the university with a design to be a pluralist; and for that purpose was entered on the law line, and at four years standing put on the *Civilian's* gown, with a full design of proceeding in civil law; but, when he purposed to take orders, he was informed, that by the rules of the college, the society would not grant a testimonial, unless the candidate for orders had taken a bachelor of arts degree. He was therefore obliged to change his faculty of civil law, and proceed in arts.

In the *Supplement* it is affirmed, that "when his father died, he remained determined to have *Weston Parrell* only, and this he frequently declared to his family and friends, and refused to accept of *Collingtree*, or to qualify himself for the same; insomuch, that it was in danger of lapsing to the bishop‡; but at length, through the

* He had not performed any exercises towards his father's degree, and had put his name out of the College Book, before he was of sufficient standing to have taken that degree.

† Mr. Hervey's letter of Doctor's orders, bears date Sunday the 19th day of September, 1726.

‡ Mr. Hervey's father died the 4th day of May 1724; and the instrument of Mr. Hervey's

“ earnest and constant intreaties of his family and his friends,
 “ who unknown to him, had sent to, and procured from
 “ Oxford, the necessary certificate of his being complete
 “ Bachelor of Arts; in order to his taking his master’s de-
 “ gree at Cambridge, he was, after much importunity, pre-
 “ vailed on to comply with their requests, hoping that he
 “ might be thereby enabled to do so much the more good.
 “ And when he waited upon the then Bishop of Peter-
 “ borough for institution to Collingtree, which was near six
 “ months after he had been inducted into Weston, he
 “ said to him, I suppose your Lordship will be surprised to
 “ see James Hervey come to desire your Lordship to pro-
 “ mit him to be a pluralist, but I assure you I do it to ob-
 “ tain the repeated solicitations of my mother and my sis-
 “ ter, and not to please myself, or to that effect.”

In order to give the public a just notion of this fact,
 which is here very imperfectly related, recourse must again
 be had to the account given of it by the same friend and
 neighbour of Mr. Hervey, long and intimately acquainted
 with his family. This gentleman often took occasion to
 discourse with Mr. Hervey, during the life-time of his fa-
 ther, upon the subject of pluralities; and he never expres-
 sed to him the least dislike to it: he once said to him, “ I
 “ am ready and willing to go to Oxford, and keep terms,
 “ do my exercise, and take my master’s degree, if my fa-
 “ ther will bear my charges;” and this friend earnestly
 pressed his father to do so: but he refused, saying, he
 would have had his son continue in the university, when he
 was there, and he would willingly have been at the ex-
 pence; “ but now, says he, he has money enough of his
 “ own (for an edition or two of his *Meditations* had been
 “ sold off †) and therefore I think I may be excused.”—

Hervey’s institution to Collingtree, is dated the 16th day of August 1759, so that there was no
 vacancy of the living, supposing all the months afterwards, wanting one day.

* Mr. Hervey’s institution to Collingtree, bears date the 29th of May
 1759, and he was inducted the 4th of June. How can the editor make it near six months
 from the 4th of June to the 16th of August?

† The reader might be reminded on this occasion, of what is mentioned in his life,
 that the whole profits of that book, amounting to about 200*l.*, were employed by Mr.
 Hervey in charity.

When his father's health visibly declined, many people said, that Mr. Hervey's conscience would not let him hold two livings, and when his friend and neighbour mentioned the report to him, he took him by the hand and said, "my dear friend, I am so far from having any scruple about holding two livings, that if the law would allow of it, I would hold *four*, for I think I could provide that they should be well taken care of."

After his father's death, his ill health made him very indigent as to preferment, and his family and friends were obliged to be assuaging to make him take his *first*, as his second living, and the reason why he was so long, before he took it, was, because there was so much to be done to qualify him for it. It was owing entirely to the weakness of his body, that he was unwilling to take journeys to *Cambridge* for a master's degree, to *Lambeth* for a dispensation, and to *Peterborough* for institution; and if the living had been so near lapsing before he determined to take it, as is represented in the editor's *Supplement*, it must inevitably have lapsed before he had finished *half* his journey. With regard to the speech he is recorded to have made to the bishop, can any one entertain so *base* an opinion of Mr. Hervey, as to think, he would come before his Lordship, and say, "I am doing a thing, which my soul *detests*," for sure I am, his soul abhorred to do any thing, which his conscience suggested to him, was not strictly right. The meaning of his speech (which by the bye had never been printed) was, "When I waited on your Lordship

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* Mr. Hervey expressed himself to the same purpose to his own minister, Mr. Laing Hervey, Wine Merchant, in Alder's Lane London, to his friend Mr. John Laing, Rev. Mr. Robert Knight, the late rector of Willon Parvly; and to several others. For the latter words, however, no candid person will suppose, that he was charitable as Mr. Hervey could mean, that he would make to himself the seventh of four livings.

† It is justly observed in the Gentleman's Magazine, "That it must be understood by Mr. Hervey's friends, that if it was wrong to become a Purveyor to pleasure, it was equally wrong to become a Purveyor to sin. His modesty and liberality, for it is allowed, to the editor's Supplement, that he was a Purveyor to sin, would be a great advantage to the world." (See the Gentleman's Magazine, 1774, p. 100.)

" about two months ago, I had so much the appearance of
" a dead corpse, that you will be surprized to see me in the
" land of the living, and coming to take a second prefer-
" ment; to which I am induced, not by an inordinate de-
" sire of wealth, but of subsisting my family comfortably,
" and of being as extensively useful as possible."

It is hoped, that these facts and dates will be sufficient to vindicate Mr. Hervey, from any misconstruction, which may be put upon his conduct through the *mistakes* (undoubtedly involuntary) of the writer of the *Supplement*; and to prove, that he had not lost sight of that text of our Lord, "*He, that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.*" Matt. x. 37.



LETTERS

OF THE

REVEREND JAMES HERVEY,

LETTER I.

TO HIS SISTER.

Lincoln College, Oxon, Sept. 16, 1733.

Dear Sister,

WAS there any occasion to apologize for the serious purport of this, it would be sufficient to direct you to the date and the time of its inditing; but I promise myself that to you any thing of this nature will be unnecessary: for though we are in the very prime and spring of our years, strongly disposed to admire, and perfectly capacitated to relish the gaieties of youth; yet we have been inured to moderate the warmth of our appetites, accustomed to anticipate in our minds the days of darkness, and incessantly disciplined into a remembrance of our Creator. For my part, I find no season so proper to address one of the principal sharers of my heart, one of my nearest and dearest relations, as that I have at present chose and made use of, when either an universal silence composes the soul, and calms every turbulent emotion, or the voice of joy and gladness speaking through celestial music, invites to adore the wonders of our Redeemer's love touches upon the strings of the softest passions, and implies the most sweet, most tender sentiments.

As I was the other day traversing the fields in quest of health, I observed the meads to have lost that profusion of fragrant odours which once perfumed the air, to be disrobed of that rich variety of curious dyes, which surpassed even Solomon in all his glory. Not a single flower appears to gladden the sight, to bespangle the ground, or enamel the barren landscape. The clouds that ere long distilled in dews of honey, or poured themselves forth in showers of fatness, now combine in torrents to everflow the lifeless earth, to bury or sweep away all the faint foot steps of ancient beauty. The hills that were crowned with corn, the vallies that laughed and sung under loads of golden grain; in a word, the whole face of nature, that so lately rejoiced for the abundance of her plenty, is become bare, naked, and disconsolate. As I was continuing my walk, and musing on this joyless scene, methought the sudden change exhibited a lively picture of our frail and transitory state; methought every object that occurred seemed silently to forewarn me of my own future condition.

I dwelt on these considerations till they fermented in my fancy, and worked themselves out in such-like expressions, "What! must we undergo so grievous an alteration? we, who are the favourites of time, on whom youth and health and strength, shed their selected influence! we, who are so apt to look upon ourselves as exempt from care, or pains, or troubles, and privileged to drink in the sweets of life without restraint, without alloy! Must we forego the sunshine of our enjoyments for any thing resembling this melancholy gloom! must the sparkling eye set in haggard dimness? the lovely features and glowing cheeks be obscured by pale deformity? must soft and gay desires be banished from our breasts, or mirth and jollity form our conversation? must the vigour of our age fall away like water that runneth apace, and the blissful minutes of the prime of our years vanish like a dream? If this be our case, in vain sure do we boast our superior felicity, in vain do we glory in being the darlings of heaven. The inanimate creation droop indeed, sicken, and languish, for a time, but quickly revive, rejoice, and again shine forth in their brightest lustre: no true, they relin-

“ quish, at the approach of winter, their verdant honors,
“ but rest fully sure of receiving them with interest from
“ the succeeding Spring. But man, when he has passed
“ the autumn of his maturity, when he has once resigned
“ himself into the cold embraces of age, bids a long, an
“ eternal adieu to all that’s entertaining, amiable, or curious-
“ ing ; no pleasing expectations refresh his mind ; not the
“ least dawnings of hope glimmer in, to qualify the dark-
“ some looking for of death.”

I had not long indulged these bitter reflections, before I espied a remedy for those sore evils which occasioned them. Though I perceived all our passionate delight to be vanity, and the issue of them vexation of spirit, yet I saw likewise that virtue was substantial, and her fruits joy and peace : that though all things came to an end, the ways of wisdom were exceeding broad. The seeds of piety, if implanted in our tender breasts, duly cherished, and constantly cultivated, will bud and blossom even in the winter of our days ; and when white and red shall be no more ; when all the outward embellishments of our little fabric shall disappear, this will still flourish in immortal bloom. To walk humbly with our God, dutifully with our parents, and charitably with all, will be an inexhaustible source of never-ceasing comforts. What, though we shall sometimes be unable to hear the voice of singing men and singing women ; though all the senses prove false to their trust, and refuse any longer to be inlets of pleasure ; ’tis now dear Sister, ’tis now in our power to make such happy provisions as even then, in those forlorn circumstances, may charm our memories with ravishing recollections, and regale all our faculties with the continual feast of an applauding conscience. What sweet complacency, what unspeakable satisfaction shall we reap from the contemplations of an uninterrupted series of spotless actions ! no present uneasinesses will prompt us impatiently to wish for dissolution, nor anxious tears for futurity, make us immoderately dread the impending stroke ; all will be calm, easy, and serene ; all will be soothed by this precious, this invaluable thought, that by reason of the meekness, the innocence, the purity, and other christian graces which adorned the several stages of our

progress through the world, our names and our ashes will be embalmed, the chambers of our tomb consecrated into a paradise of rest, and our souls, white as our locks, by an easy transition, become angels of light.

I am, with love to my Brother,

Dear Sister,

Your most affectionate Brother,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER II.

TO HIS SISTER.

Lincoln College, Oxon, March 28, 1734

Dear Sister,

IT is now a considerable time since I enjoyed the true and real pleasure of your company. I say true and real, because my fancy has often took its flight to *Hard-ington*, and delighted itself with the imaginary conversation of you and my other dear relations; I have frequently recollected, and as it were acted over again in my mind, the many pleasing hours we have spent together in reading holy and edifying books, or discoursing on pious and useful subjects. And methinks I should have been exceeding glad to have had the satisfaction yet more improved, by receiving a letter from you; which I am sure would have been full of the most tender endearments of love and affection, and I hope would not have wanted expressions of true religion and virtue; and could I but once see that, could I but observe ourselves not only dwelling together in unity, but travelling hand in hand towards the heavenly Jerusalem, mutually encouraging and assisting one another to fight the good fight, to lay hold on eternal life, then should I greatly rejoice, then should I begin to live.

I hope I may now congratulate your perfect recovery; however I am certain there is great reason for congratula-

tion on account of your being so choice a favourite of heaven as your frequent sicknesses, and often infirmities speak you to be. Our gracious father, though an indulgent lover of all mankind, seems to watch over you with more than ordinary care and concern, to be extremely desirous, nay, even solicitous for your salvation. How does his goodness endeavour by the repeated, though lightest strokes of his rod, to cure whatever is disordered, to rectify whatever is amiss in you? How studiously does he seek by laying you on a sick bed, to make you see yourself and all things else in a true and proper light: to point out to you your frailties and follies, your darling lists, and the sins that do most easily beset you, to convince you that you are only a sojourner here upon earth, your body a poor frail and corruptible house of clay, your soul a bright, glorious, and immortal being, that is fitting to the fruition of God, and to mansions of eternal rest, to discover to you the vanity, meanness, and contemptible littleness of this world, and the worth, the importance, and amazing greatness of the next. Do not then hold out against these kind calls to repentance and amendment, do not resist such earnest importunities, such sweet solicitations. But suffer yourself by this loving correction to be made great; great in humanity, holiness, and happiness. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, and by a hearty sorrow for your past faults, and a firm resolution of obedience for the future, let this fatherly chastisement bring forth in you the peaceable fruits of righteousness. O! let us dread, let us tremble, to reject any longer the tenders of grace, lest we awake at length his justice, and draw down vengeance upon ourselves: lest our visitation be not in love and with kindness, but in heavy displeasure and with fury poured out: lest his next dispensation be not a merciful severity, but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish.

Sure I can't but admire that adorable wisdom which has contrived all things so evidently and so directly to your advantage! your late illness has, I doubt not begot in you serious thoughts and holy dispositions, and these I flatter myself will be nourished by the reception of the blessed sacrament the following *Easter*. Let us, dear sister; break

off our sins by repentance—let us amend our lives, and begin from this very instant to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world. So shall we answer the good ends of our sickness—o shall we be meet partakers of those holy mysteries here, and enjoy an inheritance amongst the saints in light hereafter—and now I can't but acquaint you how earnestly I wished that you and others of my neighbours (with whom I have discoursed upon this subject) were giving devout attendance to the prayers and praises that were offered up last *Monday* in your church, as likewise how I should rejoice with exceeding great joy, to hear that both you and they continue steadfast, or rather abound more and more in the practice of this and such other religious duties. And if you think the desire of my heart, and the longings of my soul are of any weight with any of them, pray let them know how I hope, desire, and pray that we may be worthy communicants, by an immediate forsaking of all wicked ways and a thorough amendment, as well as an unshaken resolution to persevere and advance in that amendment.

My kind respects to all that you shall shew or read this letter to, desire them not to forget me in their prayers: let ** and ** know that I often think of them, and hope they sometimes remember me, and the words that I have often spoke to them.

I am &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER III.

Lincoln College, Oxon, May 2, 1734.

Dear Sister,

FINDING myself in a writing humour, and remembering that I had formerly promised you an entertaining present, and being sensible of the decency of introduc-

ing it with an epistle ; upon these accounts I again set pen to paper and address you, notwithstanding you have so very lately received a letter from me. By an 'usefully entertaining present, I mean such an one as will improve and edify at the same time that it diverts and delights ; as will not only make you easy to yourself and agreeable to others, but also good and holy and wise unto salvation. Now I scarce know any human composition more likely to promote these excellent purposes than this poem of Dr. Young's on the last day. For being in verse, and set off with all the graces of speech and thought, it can't fail of charming as well the nice ear as the sound judgment ; and as for the subject, sure nothing can be more prodigiously pleasing, than to read of that happy time which shall be the beginning of a blissful eternity, when our Redeemer by his mighty power shall change our vile bodies that they may be like unto his glorious body, and translate us from a state of corruption in the grave to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our father. And every one must own that the most engaging persuasions to piety and holiness of conversation are drawn from the recompence of a future invaluable reward ; and that the most sovereign preservative against all ungodliness and worldly lusts is the terror, the insupportable terrors of the Lord. It therefore you would please yourself, refine your taste, or have the practice of religion pleasing, instead of plays, ballads, and other corrupt writings, read this almost divine piece of poetry ; read it (as I have done, over and over, think upon it, endeavour to digest it thoroughly, and even to get by heart the most moving passages, and then I trust you will find it answer the ends I purpose in sending it.

You will excuse me from exercising my poetical talent, since there are already two copies of recommendatory verses, and because I perceive such an attempt will be either very absurd or very dangerous. For should I tack together a few doggerel rhymes, this would be an affront to you ; whereas, should I succeed as well as to gain the applause of my readers, this I am sure would portend very great

harm, if not to you, yet most certainly to me. For what can portend greater harm than the words of praise; which, though smoother than oil, yet be they very swords? What can be more destructive of that humble mind which was in Christ Jesus, that meek and lowly spirit which is in the sight of God of great price! I am so far from carrying on my versifying designs, that I heartily wish I had never conceived any; that those lines I sent to my cousin * * * * * had either never been made, or that I had never heard them commended. Pride and vanity are foolish and unreasonable in dust and ashes, and which is worse, odious and detestable before infinite perfection and infinite power. Oh! I t'you and I then dread whatever may administer fewel to these worst of tempers, more than the poison of asps, or the pestilence that walketh in darkness. Let us pray against seeking, desiring, or taking pleasure in the honor that cometh of men. And if at any time the flattering tongue, that snare of death shall overtake us, let us instantly fly unto our Saviour, and complain unto our God; then let us remember; and remembering, let us acknowledge, that we are nothing, have something, and deserve nothing but shame and contempt, but misery and punishment.

I hope you was so happy as to receive the holy sacrament this Easter, and I beg of you to be so wise as well to understand and often to consider what you then did. We gave up ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice to God: so that we must look upon ourselves as having now no longer any right or title to ourselves, but as our heavenly master's sole property; we may not follow our own, but must do his will in all things. We undertook to lead a new life, to follow the commandments of God, and to walk henceforth in his holy ways; and this and whatever else we promised at that sacred altar, we must endeavour to perform if we hope to enter into heaven. Let therefore no day pass without reflecting on the solemn engagement we have made, and without examining whether we have acted up to it. Let us not imagine that we did the whole of our duty, when we took the consecrated elements into our mouths, but be convinced,

that we only as it were listed ourselves afresh under our captain's banner, and that the service, the fight against him and our enemies is to be hourly renewed, and constantly maintained even unto death.

I am, &c.

JAMES HEAVES.

LETTER IV.

Oxon, March 11, 1735.

Dear Sister,

YESTERDAY the judge came hither, and to-day the assizes begin. I shall go to hear the assize sermon presently. This can't but put us in mind of that great account we must all give before the judgment seat of Christ. How melancholy a sight it is, to see a poor criminal go up to the bar! All he has is no longer his own; his very life is in the power of the magistrate, and he is in great danger of a speedy death. And if this be so dreadful, how infinitely more dreadful it will be to appear before a most strict and awful tribunal? The good Lord grant, that you and I may not be cast in that tremendous trial! a trial that will be undergone before angels and God; upon the issue of which our eternal life will depend. Was I to wish a wish for the dearest friend in the world; it should not be for gold, or jewels, or apparel; these things are fading, and the fashion of them passeth away: but it should be for a favourable sentence in that last and great day. Will not the archangel shortly sound the trumpet? will not the dead come forth of their graves, and the antient of days sit? how valuable then will an humble and holy life be! if you and I be found with the wedding-garment on, we shall doubtless enter into the joy of our Lord, never to die, never to grieve, never to be pained more. But if we should either of us be negligent in this matter, if we should be surprised

without oil in our lamps ; Oh ! the fearfulness and trembling that will come upon us ! the horrible dread that will overwhelm us ! to think that we must for ever be shut out of heaven, banished eternally from the presence of God, the society of saints, and the fullness of joy ! if you or I were to be torn from our kindred and our father's house, and hurried away captive into a foreign country ; there to be chained to the galleys, or condemned to the mines : how would this grieve both us and our dear relations ! how would it pierce our souls as a sword ! If this be sad, (as certainly it is) alas ! what will it be, to be everlastingly separated by the unpassable gulf ? for one to be caught up to heaven, and there to be ever with the Lord ; and for the other to be thrust down into torments, and dwell with wailing and gnashing of teeth ? Dear Sister, let us consider this ; and give all diligence to make our calling and election sure ; that when the changes and chances of this mortal life are over, we may meet and live together in glory everlasting. Which is, and shall be the hearty prayer of,

Yours, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER V.

Dumfries, May 7, 1737.

Good Madam,

PRAY be pleased to cast your eye to the bottom, and observe who it is that desires to bespeak you. It is one who knows himself to have been guilty of the most slighting behaviour, and to have deserved in return your greatest disdain. If after you perceive his name to be *Hervey*—that *Hervey* who was so lately and so long in London without ever waiting upon Mrs. * * *, without paying his respects to her who merits so much the esteem of every

christian ; without any thankful acknowledgement for her kind wishes so often conceived, and her prevailing prayers so often put up in his behalf—It, Madam, after you are informed of all this, you can bear to give the remainder of the paper a favourable reading, I shall not only account myself highly obliging to your good-nature, but when I have occasion to put up an affront, and to exercise forgiveness, I will think upon it as a pattern.

On *Sunday* I was called out by providence from my own flock, to preach at two strange churches. They lay at a considerable distance from each other, and from *Dummer* ; so that in passing to them, and repairing again to my own parish, I travell'd a good many miles. All the way I went along I was entertained in the finest manner imaginable ; far more finely than mine, or, I may venture to say, than any words can describe. I wish I had the glowing colours, the accurate pencil, and the masterly genius of some first-rate painter, that I might draw out, with as little injustice as possible, the lovely landscape, and make a present, in some degree, worthy your acceptance. The air was in its best temperament ; neither so hot as to enfeeble or dispirit, nor so cold as to cause any uneasy chillness. It was fit to recommend and set off the most agreeable objects, and to be the vehicle of perfumes, not much inferior to Myrrhe, Aloes, and Cassia. I was in company with a gentleman of a clear understanding, and a tolerable share of reading ; he had seen much of the world, and had a very deep piercing insight into things ; he could talk judiciously upon most topics, and would sometimes bestow some hints upon religious ones. So that when I was disposed for conversation, I could have immediate recourse to one, who would refine my taste, and improve my judgment, if not minister grace to my heart. The face of the skies also conspired to render every prospect compleatly pleasant, it was decked and diversified with silver-like clouds ; not such as were charged with heavy rains, but such as prevented the annoyance of one continued glare, and changed the sunshine frequently for a welcome shade ; such as served for a foil to the unsullied ethereal blue. Thus did God order all circumstan-

res so as to render our ride exceedingly delightful. At our first setting out, we went over strong ground ; where no seed was sown, and so no fruit could grow. Its uselessness was not owing to any defect in point of fertility, but to a want of being matured.

Is not this the case of many immortal souls who are born with blessed dispositions, and bid fair for becoming eminent saints, but are lost and spoiled for want of care and instruction ? Oh ! for faithful shepherds to seek them, for industrious husbandmen to cultivate them ! send Lord a plenty of such to work in thy vineyard, and to watch over thy sheep ! this coarse beginning, though it had no form nor comeliness in itself, yet tended to give an additional verdure to the succeeding scenes. So the bottomless pit and the unquenchable fire, though infinitely formidable, will create in the elect a more tasteful relish and enjoyment of their heavenly felicity. We made more haste than ordinary to get away from this barren spot. For why should any one tarry in such a place, or frequent such an acquaintance, where all that occurs is vain and unprofitable ? Where nothing truly beneficial can either be imparted or acquired ? The sooner we are delivered from such a situation, the better ; no departure can be abrupt, no flight precipitate. When we were advanced a little further, we entered upon a large enclosure. Here were all the footsteps of a commendable and successful industry. The wheat was in the blade, and sprang up with a plenteous increase, and in goodly array. It was not choked with weeds, nor embarrassed with thistles, but like a clean and even mantle, covered the plain ; a present credit, and likely to be a future comfort to its owner. This suggested to me the value of a diligent hand, that portion which it is in every one's power to bequeath to himself. By a spirit of management, even the wilderness may be brought to bud and blossom as a rose, and was there such a spirit in the professors of religion, it would prompt them to be, like Dorcas, full of good works ; or like the great Apostle, continually aspiring after fresh and higher measures of perfection. We should be frugal of our time, careful of our talents, and most laudably

covetous of every grain of improvement in piety. We held on our course, admiring still as we went, the reeking earth, the infant corn, and the pregnant promises of a prodigious harvest. This led me to muse upon one of the distinguishing doctrines of christianity, I mean the general resurrection. It convinced me how perfectly possible it is with God to raise the dead ; it gave me also a glimpse of that perfection of beauty, to which the bodies of the just shall rise. For a little while ago I beheld, and lo ! the whole vegetable world was naked and bare, without any ornaments, or so much as one amiable feature, like some withered, wrinkled, deformed hag. But now how charmingly it appears, it smiles, it shines ! no virgin is more gay and blooming, no bride is better arrayed or more sparkling. And if God so enlivens and cloaths the grass of the earth and the tenants of the field, how much more shall he quicken and ennoble our mortal bodies, which we hope are the temples of the Holy Ghost ? Several of our dear friends we have accompanied to the grave : we saw with weeping eyes their poor bones deposited in the dust.

Henceforth let us dry up our sorrows, they are not to perish, but to be purified in those gloomy chambers. The hour is coming when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. Then shall they hear the Almighty summons, and spring from their confinement like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices *. Then will they look forth from their dark abodes as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun † : never more to return to corruption, but to flourish in immortal vigour and youth. This is a pleasing meditation, and deserves to be indulged, but at this time it must give place to others. Our next remove was to a lane, set on either side with lofty trees and humble shrubs. Here the prospect was contracted, and we had nothing left to contemplate but our branching and leafy mound. The little boughs clad with a chearing green were

* Cant. viii. 14.

† Cant. vi. 10.

refreshing to the eyes; and it was curious to observe, how every different plant was decked with a different livery. Here the twigs were gem'd with buds just ready to open and unfold, there they were already opened into blossoms, and garnished the pointed thorns; so that they were very delicate to look upon, though dangerous to touch. Oh! the adorable efficacy of the divine voice! how powerfully and how lastingly it operates! God said once, let the earth bring forth; he spake not twice, and yet how punctually does nature obey this single command! several thousand years are gone about, nor is its force evacuated, impaired, or at all diminished. It endureth in full authority to this day, and is still a most binding law to all the material world. O that men would lay this to heart, and learn a lesson of obedience from the inanimate creation! all other things continue according to their maker's ordinance, and shall man be the only rebel in the kingdom of nature? Shall man alone make the word of omnipotence to be of none effect? While our sight was regaled in this manner, a set of chiming bells saluted our ears with a solemn and serene harmony. It had no great diversity of stops, nor artful mixture of notes, but sure it was most gladdening music, and spoke a heavenly meaning. It was calculated to inspire such a joy as the royal Psalmist felt, when he heard the acceptable invitation of going up to the house of the Lord. On a sudden, when we were least apprehensive of it, the wind wheeled about, and bore away the silver sounds. But it was only to bring them back again as unexpectedly, with the fresh pleasure of a grateful surprize. Here I thought of the sweet influences of grace, and wished for that happy time, when the visits of the blessed spirit will be uninterrupted. Quickly the lawns and plains disappeared again, and we dived into a wood. Numbers of sprightly birds, hopping and singing among the branches, solaced us as we passed. We thanked the pretty songsters, and bid them go on to supply our lack of praise. But what most of all affected us, being altogether new, was the warbling of the nightingale. What a tuneful throat has that charming creature, and what an unwearied use does she

make of it ! I myself heard her melody in the day-time, and I am told in the night season also she takes no rest. How sovereign and undeserved is the goodness of the Lord to the children of men ! the pipe of truth is wasteful chori-ster, though now incessant in thank-sings, must soon be sealed up in cruel silence : while the mouth of dull and ungrateful mortals will be filled with everlasting anthems. The air was impregnated with sweets, and without money or without price we breathed in such a delicious fragrance, as far excelled the pow'ers of the merchant*. This put me in mind of some beautiful lines of the great Milton's.

—————Now gentle gales
Fanning, the odoriferous wings, disperse
Native perfumes and whisper whence they stole
Their balmy spoils.

The other recalled to my memory part of a divine description, vastly superior to Milton's. Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land †

Two of our senses being so exquisitely gratified, we were in no haste to leave the place, though it was narrow, and afforded no other prospect but the shining canopy over our heads. But as soon as we were emerged from this sylvan path, what wonders presented themselves to our view. I think I was scarce ever more agreeably startled in my life. We stood upon the brow of a hill, and underneath were tracts of level ground of an immense circumference. The labouring eye could hardly descry the utmost bounds. The whole scene, being parcelled out among a variety of tillers, and producing variety of fruits, was like a noble piece of chequer work. The nearer parts, and those distinctly discern-

O

* Cant. iii, 6.

† Cant. ii, 11, 12.

able, were replenished with rural riches. The folds were full of sheep, and of lambs frisking by the side of their fleecy dams. The vallies stood so thick with corn, that they even laughed and sung. One spot was not sprinkled, but seemed to be overlaid with a profusion of flowers, as the roof of the temple was with gold ; another was, as it were enamelled, like an embroidered carpet, with a well proportioned distribution ; some of them yellow as oranges, some white as snow, some tinged with a border as red as blood. The towns and villages interspersed here and there, looked like the tiny tents of the fabled fairies. Numberless other beauties glanced upon my sight ; but as I had not then leisure to examine them, so neither have I now room to relate them. O that these, and all the charms of the delightful season, may lead up every spectator's thoughts to the inimitable glories of heaven. And while the eye feasts upon them, let every tongue acknowledge to the honor of the all-creating God ;

These are thy glorious works, parent of good,
Almighty ! thine this universal frame,
'Tis thus wondrous fair : thyself how wond'rous then !

I am. &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER VI.

*My dear Friends, the Inhabitants of Collingtree, near
Northampton, Dummer, June 29, 1737.*

I received the letter wrote in your name, and signed with your hands, and was very well pleased with its contents. I am glad you are all in good health, and am obliged to you for retaining so honorable a remembrance of an unworthy youth. Your desire to have a careful clergy

man settle among you is perfectly right and laudable. But I fear you make an over-favourable and mistaken judgment, when you imagine me to be such an one, and pitch upon me for that purpose. However, letting this pass : it is, I say, well and wisely done of you, to be solicitous in this matter. For a minister is a person of the greatest importance imaginable ; and his demeanour therein, of beneficial or prejudicial tendency. *Beneficial*, if he be able, faithful, and watches for his souls as one that must give account. *Prejudicial*, if he be unskillful, unactive, and unconcerned about the spiritual welfare of his people. These things, that pertain to salvation, and the means of obtaining everlasting life are lodged in his hands. He is the steward of the mysteries of Christ, and so the guardian (under divine grace) of your best and most abiding interests. If through ignorance he mismanage, or through idleness neglect this weighty trust, it may be the ruin of immortal souls. Whereas, if he be both discreet and diligent in his holy vocation, he may be the instrument of the richest benefits to those committed to his charge. His praying to God, and his preaching to them, may be attended with such a blessing from on high, as will fill them with heavenly wisdom ; form to true holiness ; and fit them for the future glory. Benefits these, not inconsiderable or momentary, but such as are great beyond expression, and lasting to eternity. For these reasons, it will be your wisdom and your happiness to procure a pastor whose life is exemplary ; whose doctrine is sound ; whose heart is warm with zeal for God ; and whose bowels yearn with compassion for men. If your bones were broken, or if you were brought to death's door by the force of some violent disease ; you would not be content with the prescription of a quack, but seek out for the best advice. If your wives were in hard labour ; if the children were come to the birth, and there was not strength to bring forth, you would not spare to ride for the most experienced midwife. Oh ! be as prudent and careful for the salvation of your souls, which endure for ever, as you are for the life of your bodies which is but as a vapour. Remember, that you are sick of sin, sadly disordered by sin-

dry corruptions, and must necessarily be cured before you go hence, and are no more seen. Remember, that you must be regenerated and born again, or you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. And be not willing to trust such matters, which are of infinite and everlasting moment, to the management of any that comes next.

Now that you may be the better able to make a right choice in this important particular, I will lay before you two or three of the distinguishing characters of a true minister.—First, he has a tolerable stock of knowledge. Though not enough to explain all mysteries, or to answer every perplexing question, yet enough to make himself and his hearers wise unto salvation. He may be ignorant of many things without much disparagement to himself, or prejudice to his people; but he must be acquainted with, and able to teach others all that is necessary for them to know.—Secondly, he has not only some understanding, but some experience also in the way of godliness. He has learnt to subdue, in some measure, the pride of his nature, and to be humble in his own eyes, and not fond of applause from others. He has broke the impetuosity of his passion, and generally possesses his soul in patience: or if upon some very ungrateful and provoking usage, he cannot calm his temper, yet he can curb his tongue; and though his spirit be ruffled, yet his words will be gentle. He is most commonly meek after the manner of his blessed master, and will always return blessing for cursing, according to his holy command. He has often looked into the shortness of time, and the length of eternity; he has weighed the greatness and richness of heaven, with the insignificant and despicable meanness of earth; and discovers such a mighty difference, as helps him to live above the world, even while he is in it. So that he is no lover of filthy lucre, no hunter of carnal pleasures, but his hopes, his desires and all his views of happiness, are hid with Christ in God. He is courteous and condescending, and will stoop with the utmost cheerfulness to the lowest person in his parish. He will be affable and kind, and seek to please, not himself, but his neighbours, for their good, to edification. But you

must not expect to find him trifling or ludicrous; he will not preach to you on a Sunday, and play with you on the week days, but carry the spirit of his sermons into his ordinary conversation. He will maintain an uniform gravity of behaviour, without suffering it to be frozen into moroseness, or thawed into levity. He will love his parishioners, not for their agreeable persons or amiable qualities, but because they are redeemed by the blood of Christ. It will be his business and constant endeavour, I had almost said his meat and drink, to set forward their salvation. That by their being made meet for the inheritance of saints in light, his crucified Lord may see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. He will never forget the importunate request of his Saviour, but those winning and commanding words, feed my sheep, feed my lambs, will be engraven upon the tables of his heart. To fulfil this earnest request, and execute this last charge of his dearest Redeemer, will be the fixed and invariable scope of all his designs. If at any time he hits this desirable mark, by bringing home to the fold any that have gone astray, he will be as glad as one that findeth great spoils. To see the people of his care persisting in profaneness, sensuality, and an unconverted state, will be the greatest grief that he feels: but to see his children walking in the truth, mortifying their evil affections, and growing up in goodness as the calves of the stall, this will be his joy and crown of rejoicing; better to him than thousands of silver and gold. It is his work to win souls, and by the former of these qualifications he is fitted for it, by the latter he is wholly devoted to it. And in order to prosecute it with the greater success, he will, first, take heed to himself, that his life be a fair and beautiful transcript of his doctrine, such as may remind men of, and be daily reinforcing his instructions. He will not bind the yoke upon your shoulders, till he has wore it himself; and should the paths of religion prove never so thorny, he will go first and beat the way. As far as human infirmities permit, he will strive to be unblameable and unreprieveable, that he may renew the apostle's challenge, be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ. Secondly, his preaching

will be plain ; full of such useful sense as may be edifying to the better learned, and yet delivered in so easy a manner, as may be intelligible to the ignorant. It will not only be plain, but powerful also, if preceding prayers and tears, if words coming warm from the heart, and accompanied with an ardent desire of being attended to ; if to feel himself what he speaks, and so long that it may be felt by others, can make it such, he will declare the whole will of God, without withholding or mincing any. Be the truth never so disagreeable, contrary to your profits, or contrary to your pleasures, you will be sure to hear it. He will indeed shew it in as lovely a light, and make it as palatable as he can, but nothing will prevail upon him to conceal or disguise it. Thirdly, he will not confine his teaching to God's day or house, but will exercise his care of you every day, and will bring it home to your own houses, whether you invite him or no. He will frequently visit you, and for the same end as he meets you at church. Now, shall you like this part of his duty, or bid him welcome, when he comes on such an errand ? Nay, he will think himself bound to proceed farther, and to inquire into the state of your souls, and your proceedings in your families ; whether you are competently furnished with saving knowledge ? and are careful to increase it daily, by allowing a daily portion to your time for reading the scriptures ? What virtues you are deficient in, what vices you are subject to ? What evil tempers, what vile affections, what unruly passions are predominant in you, and want to be suppressed ? Whether your children are catechised, and your servants instructed ? Whether you are constant in family worship, and at your closet devotions ? How you spend the sabbath ; whether you squander it away in impertinent visits, idle chat, or foolish jesting ; or whether you consecrate it to the better exercises of prayer, praise, holy discourse, reading and meditation ? These, and other points of the like nature, he will examine into, and exhort you to amend what is amiss, no less than encourage you to persevere in that which is good. Nor will he exhort you once or twice only, but again and again, and hardly leave off till he has won your consent. In things that re-

late to himself, he will be easily said nay; but when the great God insists upon obedience, and a blessed immortality will be lost by disobedience, he will be instant in season and out of season; he will solicit with unwearied applications the important cause, and press you to perform your duty; as the poor widow importuned the unjust judge to avenge her of her adversary, he will add to his exhortations, reproofs. His eye will be open, and his ears attentive to what passes in his parish; and when any one walks disorderly, he will meet him as *Elijah* did *Ahab* *, with a rebuke in his mouth. This I can promise, that he will not rail at, nor accost you with reproachful words; but he will certainly set before you the things that you have done. He will not defame you behind your backs, but whether you be rich or poor, whether you be pleased with it or not, he will bear in mind the commandment of the Lord, and shew his people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins †. He will tell you with tenderness, but yet with plainness, that such courses are a sad and too sure a proof, that grace has not had its proper work on your souls, that ye are carnal, and have not the spirit of Christ. So that a true minister of the gospel will be a constant inspector of your actions, a faithful monitor of your duty and an impartial reprover of your offences, he will guide you by his counsel, and animate you by his example, and bless you by his prayers. If you be willing and obedient, he will conduct you safely through a troublesome world, and bring you to the land of everlasting felicity: but if you be perverse and obstinate, he will be a standing terror to your conscience here, and a swift witness against you hereafter; he will be the unhappy means of increasing your present guilt, and aggravating your future account, and of making it more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* in the day of judgment, than for you.

And now, my kind and dear friends, are you, upon second thoughts, desirous of having such a pastor placed

amongst you? Shall you be glad to have the fore-mentioned vigilance and diligence exerted in the holy function? Can you willingly submit to an oversight so narrow, to admonitions so incessant, to corrections so closely particular! If, after due considerations, ye are willing; give me leave to inform you, how ye may procure such a man of God to come unto you, and take up his abode with you. He is an exceeding great and precious blessing to any people; too precious to be purchased with money, and is the free gift of God. So that the way to obtain him, is to address yourselves to heaven, and make supplication to the Almighty. What cannot prayer, fervent and believing prayer do? I scarcely know any thing that is above its power, or beyond its reach. Prayer has locked up the clouds, and opened them again, made the earth as iron, and the heavens as brass; prayer has arrested the sun in its race, and made the moon stand still in her march, and reversed the perpetual decree; prayer has fetched down angels from above, and raised up the dead from beneath, and done many wonderful works. In like manner prayer will get for you as useful and worthy teacher; if he be ever so far off, this will bring him near; if he be never so averse, this will overrun his inclination. Do you doubt of this? I own you would have good reason, if you had nothing but my word to support it. But what if God, who cannot lie, has testified and given you assurance of the same? Why then, I hope, ye will be no longer faithless, but believing. Hear, therefore, what he himself has said by his own beloved son, ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find*. Again, he saith, if ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it †. Here you see the Almighty has passed his word, and he, to whom all things are possible, has pawned his veracity, that he will not deny you the request of your lips. And dare you not trust the all-powerful? Can you have a better security than his, whose title is faithful and true? The divine promises are all immutable, stronger than the strong

* Matt. vii. 7. † John xiv. 14.

mountains, and heaven and earth shall pass away, sooner than one jot or tittle of them shall pass unfulfilled. When ye desire a pious and able minister, ye desire a good thing, such as will be for the honor and glory of God to grant. Therefore encouraged by this, and confiding on his most sure promise, beg of the most high to 'give you a true pastor, and shepherd for your souls; one that may love you like *St Paul*, rule you like *David*, teach you like *Samuel*, and lead you like *Joshua* to the heavenly *Canaan*: that blessed and blissful country, where we all would be!

O God great and glorious, infinite in thy wisdom, and uncontrollable in thy power! thy providence is over all thy works; thine eyes run to and fro through the earth, to behold the condition, and supply the wants of thy servants. Thou sentest *Moses* to deliver thy children out of *Egypt*, *Philip* to instruct the ignorant Eunuch, and *Peter* to preach to the devout centurion. Blessed Lord, who art the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever, vouchsafe the same mercy to us of this parish, that we also may have a teacher come from God. Grant us, thou giver of every good gift, a faithful shepherd for our souls, who may feed us in a green pasture, and lead us forth beside the waters of comfort. One that may be wholly devoted to thy service, and intent upon nothing but the due discharge of his important office; who may be a light to our paths by his godly directions, and as salt to our corrupting souls by his unblameable conversation. Let such a minister, we beseech thee, be placed over us, as will watch for our spiritual welfare, that will love us with an affectionate and parental tenderness; that will cherish us, as a hen, cherisheth her chickens under her wings. One that may be able as well as willing to instruct us in our duty, to whom thou has revealed the wondrous things of thy law, and the glorious mysteries of thy gospel. Whose lips may preserve knowledge, whose tongue may be continually dealing it out, and whose mouth may be unto us a well of life. Whose discourses may be milk to the babes, meat to the strong, and medicine to the

sick. Who may have a skilful as well as a compassionate zeal, and know how to divide rightly the word of truth, who may be an example as well as an exhorter a pattern as well as a preacher, of every charitable action, and every devout temper. Under whose guidance we may walk in the ways of peace and piety, of meekness and humility, of righteousness and salvation; till we all come to the city of the living God, to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. Oh! grant us such a priest, and cloath him with such qualifications, and make thy chosen people joyful. Hear us most merciful father, for his sake, whose sheep we are, who bought us with his blood; who died for us on earth, and maketh intercession for us in heaven, even Jesus Christ; to whom, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

LETTER VII.

TO HIS SISTER.

Dummer, July 5, 1737.

Dear Sister,

I Hope *London* does not disagree with the health of your body, and I dare say it may be made serviceable to the health of your soul. There are precious opportunities of going to church, and worshipping the divine Majesty, every morning and evening, which I hope you do not slight, but embrace with all thankfulness, and prefer before every other engagement. If you was grievously sick, and even hard at death's-door, you would be glad to have recourse to any physician: but if you heard of one that could not possibly mistake your case, and would infallibly cure you, how eagerly would you fly to him? Sister, believe me, our souls are sick of sin, sick of worldly-mindedness, sick of pride,

sick of passion, and sundry other disorders, which, if not speedily healed, will bring us down, not only to the grave, but to the torments of hell. We have almost as little taste, or relish of holy and devout exercises, as a sick and languishing man has, for the strong meats he loved when he was well; which is a plain, and too undeniable a proof, that our better, our immortal part is sadly out of order. Now at church you may find a sure and never-failing remedy for your spiritual disorders. God's grace is a sovereign medicine, and in his house it is to be obtained. There he, like a most bountiful and beneficent prince, stands ready to dispense the help and assistance, the enlightening and purifying influences of his spirit. Sure then, we who have such urgent, and immediate need of them, shall not be backward to go, and with an humble earnestness seek them. I say immediate; for since our life is so uncertain, and we know not what a day may bring forth, we ought to get our work dispatched, and our accounts ready without delay. It is evening now I write this; and I cannot tell whether this may not be the night, in which I am to hear that amazing cry, behold the bridegroom cometh. I intend to direct my letter to my dear sister****, and I hope she will receive it safe; but I have no certainty, whether she be yet alive or no. For ought I know, her soul may be standing before the judgment seat of Christ, and going to be fixed, if not already fixed, in an unchangeable eternal state. Her body may be pale and cold, and stretched out in the coffin; my dear mamma and my brothers taking their last farewell, and giving her the parting kiss; the jinner just about to nail on the lid, and hide her face for ever from mortal view. Nay, she may already have been carried upon men's shoulders, and committed to the dust, so that what I am imagining, may find her in the grave. She may be sleeping in some church yard that I know nothing of, among thousand of dead bodies, never to awake, never to arise, till the archangel's trumpet sounds, and the heavens are no more.—The very imagination of this sudden change, strikes a damp upon my heart; I hope it is not a presage of what has really happened; if it be, and if my dear sister is a departed

spirit, I will henceforth labour to dress my soul with holiness, that it may be ready to go forth at a minute's warning, and give her the meeting in another world. There, if my sister and I shall be found to have minded, above all things, the one thing needfull, and to be full of heavenly, spiritual and divine tempers, she will be to me better than a sister; and I shall be to her, better than a loving and affectionate

Brother, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER VIII.

My Dear Friend,

I received your kind letter, and thank you for your affectionate wishes. I endeavour not to be behind-hand with my people in this exercise of love. You are always on my heart, and often, often mentioned in my prayers. Especially that you may be partakers of the Holy Ghost, and feel all those saving convictions, which are described by our Lord, *John* xvi. 6, 9, 10, 11. That you may be interested in the new covenant; and enjoy all those precious privileges, which were purchased for us by our dying Saviour, and are recorded by his Apostle, *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12.

Yesterday, in the evening, two gentlemen of the city came to visit me. Our conversation was such, as I would have your's be. Such as was suited (if God vouchsafe his blessing) to edify one another, and minister grace to the hearers. We talked of that infinitely condescending and gracious friend of sinners, who came from heaven on purpose to be crucified for us, and is returned into heaven on purpose to intercede for us. The intercession of our blessed Lord was the chief subject of our discourse, and is a most comfortable article of our faith. Because

His intercession never ceases.—He sitteth at the right hand of his father, in an abiding posture.—Other High-Priests are removed by death ; but he ever liveth to make intercession for us.—We resign part of our time to sleep, and then lose all attention to our own interests ; but he is the keeper of Israel, who never slumbereth nor sleepeth.—We too frequently forget our God, and neglect to carry on communion with him. But Christ has written our names (w rithless as they are) upon the palms of his hands ; and a mother may forget her sucking child, much sooner than he will discontinue his kind concern for the weakest believer.

His intercession always prevails.—If Moses was heard, when he made supplication in behalf of Israel ; if Job was not denied, when he petitioned for the pardon of his three friends ; if Elijah's prayer entered into the ear of the Lord God of hosts, when he requested for rain upon the parched earth ; surely God's dearest beloved son, will not be rejected, when he maketh intercession for the saints.—The father loves him, infinitely loves him, and therefore hears him.—He has purchased whatever he asks : purchased it by his obedience and death, and therefore cannot but obtain his suit.*

Perhaps, you will enquire, what it is, that Christ prays for ?—We are informed of this in *John xvii.* he prays, that we may be kept from the evil, that is in the world, verse 15.—That we may be sanctified through the truth ; sanctified through the word of scripture, verse 17.—That we may be united to Christ, and have fellowship with the father by faith, fellowship with one another by brotherly love, verse 21.—That we may be made perfect in his righteousness ; presented without spot through his blood ; and, at last, be with him where he is, to behold his glory, and partake of joy, verses 23, 24.

Should you be desirous of knowing, whether you are in the number of those, for whom Christ intercedes ? You may determine this important point, by the following questions.—Do you join your own repeated and earnest supplications to his intercession ?—And do you rely wholly upon Christ's

unspeakable merits, for the acceptance of all your prayers ? —If so, be not discouraged ; Christ is your advocate with the Father. He died for you on the cross, and pleads his meritorious oblation for you on his throne.

Is not this an inestimable blessing ? If Hezekiah desired the prayers of Isaiah ; if Darius desired the prayers of the godly Jews, for himself and his sons ; how should we rejoice in having the prayers of the exalted Jesus !—If we are tempted, let this be our security, *Luke* xii. 31, 32. If we fall into sin, through the infirmity of the flesh, let this be our refuge, *1 John*, ii. 1, 2. If under apprehensions of death, or eternal judgment, let this be our consolation, *Rom.* vii. 33, 34.

I don't write out the scriptures, because I would have you look them out, or even write them out with your own hand. And may the blessed spirit of God write them upon all our hearts !—This will come to you, I hope, on *Christmas* eve. You will talk of this letter, and its contents, to your harvest-men. I should be glad to be with you, and converse as we used to do, on Christ and the kingdom of heaven. None of my flock, I hope, will be filled with liquor, wherein is excess ; but be filled with the spirit.—My kind love to your family, and all your neighbours ; particularly to your brother *William*, whose letter I shall answer by the first opportunity.

Yours, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER IX.

Stoke-Abbey, June 19, 1732.

Dear Sister,

WILL you accept of another letter from your loving brother, who loves your better part, and would fain

be helpful to your immortal interests? I think I wrote to you when at *London*; I know not what acceptance that letter found, but I can assure you it meant nothing but good, spiritual benefit, and everlasting advantage to you.

I hope * * * * and * * * * are more easy with regard to me and my welfare. My disorder is a languor and faintness, a feebleness and inability for action, which is increased or lessened according to the various temperature of the weather. I bless God Almighty, I am not deprived of my appetite to food, neither are my bones chafened with pain, so that many impute all my complaints to a hippish and over-timorous turn of mind, to a distempered imagination, rather than a disordered body.

I write this in a pleasure-house of Mr. * * * *, situate upon a high cliff, on the very edge of the sea. On one side a vast tract of land extends itself, finely diversified by stately trees, flourishing corn, and pasturage for cattle. On the other side rolls the great and wide sea, where go the ships, and where it that Leviathan, whom the Almighty Creator has made to take his pastime therein. Which way soever I look, I meet with footsteps of the divine immensity: I view thy great and marvellous works, O Lord God omnipotent: I am encountered with ten thousand arguments, to fear thy tremendous power, and love thy diffusive goodness. Oh! how safe are they, who have so infinite and mighty a being for their guard! how happy are they, who have so inexhaustably rich a God for their portion! but, how wretched, dear sister, how miserably and emphatically wretched, who have such a one for their enemy and avenger! Oh! how can our feeble frame, that shrinks at a little light affliction, that is but for a moment,—how can it bear the never-ending vengeance of that prodigious arm, which stretched out the heavens, laid the foundations of the earth, and poured out the waters of the mighty deep!

I have been about twenty, or twenty six miles into *Cornwall*, and seen wondrous workmanship of the all-creating God; ragged rocks, roaring seas, frightful precipices, and dreadfully steep hills. At *Buldeford*, a market-town, about fourteen miles off, I am pretty well known, and am a little

esteemed. It is strange to tell, but let it be to the glory of God's free and undeserved goodness, though I am worthy of shame and universal contempt, yet I find favour, and good understanding almost wherever I go.

Mr. * * * 's house is situate in a fine vale. It is an ancient structure, built for the use of religious recluses, and has an antique, grave, and solemn aspect. Before it is a neat spot of ground set apart for the use of a garden, enriched with fruits, and beautified with flowers. This leads into a curious sort of artificial wilderness made of elms and limes, planted in rows, cut in form, and uniting their branches. In the midst is a fountain large enough to swim in, and a little engine playing the waters. On each side are harbours for shade, in various parts seats for rest; on the right hand runs parallel to it a clear purling brook replenished with trout, on the left a thick grove hanging from the side of a hill: the one serves for a watry mound, the other is a leafy shelter from the north wind, and both, I think, greatly ornamental. This you will say, is pleasant; but how unworthy to be compared with those blissful mansions fitting up for the righteousness in the heaven of heavens! this, and if there be any other spot a thousand times more delicate, is no better than a howling wilderness, if compared with the regions of Paradise. I wish my dear sister would earnestly seek for God's grace to draw off her affections from earthly delights, and fix there where real, and eternal joys are to be found, viz. on the blissful vision of God, and the fulness of joy that is in his presence for evermore.

I am, &c.

LETTER X.

Biddetord, December 10, 1740.

Dear Sister,

THOUGH I am so backward in my compliments, I am most hearty in my wishes, that your husband

and yourself may enjoy abundance of happiness in the married state. I congratulate, late, but I shall ever pray, that you may find blessings twisted with the matrimonial bands; and not only live lovingly together, as one flesh, but live holily together as fellow heirs of the grace of life.

I hope you will both remember the eternal world, which must very shortly receive you. That ere long the nuptial bed must be resigned for a lodging in the grave; and the ornaments of a sparkling bride, be exchanged for the dressings of death. And if, under the frequent view of these serious truths, you study to further each other in faith and holiness—then will you be true help meets one to the other: then will you come together, not for the worse, but for the better: then may you trust, that when death shall dissolve the union below, Christ Jesus will bid it commence again above; and continue to endless ages, in the midst of unspeakable delight.

Please to present my humble service to the several Mr. * * *, and Mrs. * * *, that still remain in your town, to Mrs. * * *, and her daughter; Mr. * * * and his wife, and Mr. * * *. Remember me also in the kindest manner to your poor neighbours, particularly those, who have Mr. *'s Books. May God Almighty give them grace to make a proper and practical use of them! may he sanctify the attentive and diligent reading of them, to their increase in godliness, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

When you see my *Collingtree* relations and acquaintance, salute them affectionately in my name. I suppose you will soon see our Father and Mother, present my duty to them. I should rejoice to see them again in the flesh, before any of us go hence, and are no more seen. May the father of our spirits, and the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, our righteousness, prepare us for a happy meeting in the regions of glory, and for the blissful vision of his own adorable self.

There is at *Biddford*, and has been for a considerable time, a townsman of mine, a middle-aged man, born at

his name is * * *. I little thought to find such a person in these remote parts. It puts me in mind of heaven, where people of every kindred and tongue, of all nations and languages, will form one general and glorious assembly. May you and I, dear sister, one day be numbered with those children of God; and have our lot, our delightful and everlasting lot, among the saints.

Yours, &c.

JAMES HERVLY.

LETTER XI.

Biddesford, July 7, 1741.

Dear Sister,

AFTER a very sultry journey, I arrived safe at *Biddesford*. Here I have been one whole week. At *Bath* and *Brighthelm* I made a considerable stay. I tarried at each place a couple of nights; was entertained with abundance of civility.

There is a general prospect of a plenteous harvest. The vallies stand black with corn, as makes the traveller rejoice, and the husbandman sing. There is great want and scarcity of many things, but there is plenty of fish.—Now the dry land is so barren, the waters yield the larger increase. It is observed, to the glory of God's good providence, that now flesh is so dear, fish is uncommonly cheap. Thus graciously does the Almighty, when he locks up one, open another fountain of his beneficence. During my absence from *Biddesford*, a lusty man, in the prime and vigour of life, was carried off by my father's disorder. It is therefore distinguished mercy, that our father has enjoyed; such as has been withheld from others, while it has been vouchsafed to him.

I am now far from my dear relations. Friends I have indeed, but not one of my kindred near me. Oh! that God may be my guide, my protector, and my portion here, and for ever. If the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ be my shepherd, I shall lack nothing. Unworthy, altogether unworthy of such an inestimable favour; I desire to lie at the feet of his free unmerited grace; seeking what he is ready to give, though I, alas! am most undeserving. And surely we have good reason to hope, and the very best encouragement to seek. For, if he gave his life, and spilt his blood for us, will he not much rather give us pardon of our sins, and justification through his righteousness?

I hope my brother † † † is in perfect health. I wish him a seasonable and kindly harvest; and wish you both abundance of happiness;

And am, Dear Sister.

His and yours,

JAMES HURLEY.

LETTER XII.

My Dear Friend,

I FIND you have had Mr. * * * among you; many I hope have found abundant benefit from his preaching, and you in particular. He is a shining light, a choice and industrious ambassador of Jesus Christ; what a savour of his divine master does he shed abroad? whenever he preaches! such a savour, as many corruptions cannot overcome, nor all the world suppress. Biddesford, I hope, has experienced this savour: methinks, I now see him in the pulpit, and hear him lift up his compassionate voice like a trumpet, and proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord. Methinks, I see him displaying the gospel standard, and his tongue touched from the heavenly altar, inviting sinners to

stock under his shadow ; crying, Come ye simple ones, whom Satan has beguiled, and Christ shall give you light ; come ye wicked ones, whom Satan has enslaved, and the gracious Redeemer shall set you free ; come ye that have been righteous in your own eyes, forsake this refuge of lies, and enter into the ark before the rains descend, and the floods come, which will sweep away every false hope : Oh ! lean not upon a broken reed ; build not upon the sinking sand ; but upon the rock of ages : the foundation laid in Zion by the hand of heaven itself. Come unto Jesus, ye ruined and undone sinners, for he has a tender heart that is ever open to receive you ; and an arm that is omnipotent to save you. Indeed, my friends, those that know Christ's name will seek no other Saviour, nor desire any other good ; all their bones will cry out, Lord, unto whom shall we go, but unto thee, thou only hast the words of eternal life. They that know Christ's free goodness, will put their whole trust in him, and seek no other way to the father of mercy, but through his merit. This is their only claim they have to make for their acceptance, Christ died ; but for whom did he die, my dear friends ? he gave himself a ransom for all, he was lifted upon the accursed tree, and out of his side, came a fountain of blood and water, where every sinner may bathe and be made clean. The awakened sons of Adam, that feel their miseries, see a fullness of merit in one drop of that blood, sufficient to atone for the guilt of ten thousand worlds. This fills them with great comfort, although they are vile sinners ; what though they are loathsome beggars taken from the dunghill of uncleanness, that are but now returning from the highways and hedges of every abominable practice. What though they are beasts before God : very dogs, like that poor *Syrophœnician* woman, yet, Christ's saving kindness is so great and unbounded, that he casteth out none who come unto him. Here is consolation for the trembling sinner, though he has not a grain of worthiness in himself, yet, his Lord has infinite treasures of unmerited grace. They who believe that Christ shed his precious blood for guilty sinners, will cheerfully put their trust in this atonement for pardon. They will say, Oh ! they will often say with gratitude glowing in their

breasts, and tears in their eyes; be it that my sins are as the deepest crimson dye, and more in number than the hairs of my head, yet the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, and washeth a filthily polluted conscience whiter than snow. With him there is not scanty, but plenteous redemption. Be my debts ever so great, ten thousand times ten thousand talents, yet the agonies of the once slaughtered lamb, has paid it to the very uttermost farthing. They who know his righteousness, will put their trust in it alone for justification. If I had the righteousness of a saint, says one, oh how happy should I be! if I had the righteousness of an angel, says another, I should fear no evil: but I am bold to say, that the poorest sinner that believes in Christ, has a righteousness infinitely more excellent than either saints or angels: for if the law asks for sinless perfection, it is to be found in my divine surety; if the law requires an obedience that may stand before the burning eye of God, behold it is in Jesus my Mediator: should the strictest justice arraign me, and the purest holiness make its demands upon me, I remit them both to my dying and obedient Immanuel; with him the father is always well pleased, in him the believer is complete. They who know Christ's power will put their trust in him for sanctification of heart and newness of life. Though sin is rooted in my soul, and riveted in my constitution, yet Christ can purge it out. Though it were twisted with every nerve of my flesh, yet he can make the rough tempers smooth, and the crooked dispositions straight: the vile affections, like legions of devils, he can root out, and fill every heart with the pure love of God; to which happy state of soul may both you and I be brought while here below; that we may be made meet to ascend to that habitation of God, where nothing unclean can enter.

I am &c.

LETTER XII.

*Dear Madam,**Bath,*

AT *Bath* I have tarried thus long, but propose to set forward for my father's house, if I live till next week; and if I have as good a journey thither, as I had to this place, I shall have cause to be very thankful to that gracious providence which blesses our going out, and our coming in; which protects us from wrong and robbery; from evil accidents and dangers, as with a shield. I hope you, Madam and Mr. † † †, are well; and should rejoice to hear of you both being partakers of that which I wish you to enjoy; and none can be said truly to enjoy health, but those who improve it to the purpose; all others waste health; embezzle it; squander it away; all but those who use it as a precious opportunity of making their calling and election sure. We have had most delicate weather for the harvest; a blessing, which I don't doubt has been vouchsafed to you as well as to us; an universal blessing! and such as will prove very extensive. We shall feel the good effects of it, all the year round, when winter freezes the air, and turns the earth into iron, or buries it under heaps of snow. We shall be refreshed even then with the productions of the fruitful season. Oh! that our hearts may be filled with gratitude, as our barns are with plenty. The harvest puts me in mind of the end of the world; then our bodies shall arise out of the dust of the earth, having lain awhile under the clods and seen corruption, they will then spring up incorruptible and immortal, an amazing multitude, like the blades of grass, or the ears of corn, innumerable.

The husbandman in harvest, receives a reward for all his toil. The labours of the preceding year are amply recompensed by the rich fruits of increase. And the consummation of all things will be the great retribution-day; then the christian receives the end of his faith; even the salva-

tion of his soul ; then the riches he has coveted, will be bestowed in the favour of the seeing him who is immortal, invisible ; whose loving kindness is better than life. He will see the desire of his soul, and the fruits of his Saviour's sufferings, and sit down everlastingly satisfied. The husbandman rejoices in harvest, that is his time of festivity and delight. They joy before thee, saith the scriptures, according to the joy of the righteous, they will look up and rejoice, to behold their Redeemer coming in the clouds of heaven, and all the holy angels with him ; then will they look down and rejoice to see the wicked world burning, in which they were tempted ; rejoice to see all their enemies put under their feet, and when the doors of heaven are left open, then shall they enter triumphantly into that city of the living God, and everlasting joy will be upon their heads, and reign with Christ for evermore ; into this exceeding great and eternal bliss, I wish you, Madam, and your husband, an abundant entrance, and remain his and your, &c.

LETTER XIV.

Dear Doctor,

YOU need make no excuse for recommending Mr. † † † in his distressed condition. I am pleased to see you so tenderly concerned for a brother's welfare ; and am glad you have used the freedom of applying to me ; seeing Divine Providence has put it in my power to help a disciple, a child, a member of Christ. I purposed to have given him † † †, and to have lent him three ; nor should I have been very rigorous in exacting the debt, provided there was but little ability to repay, should create anxiety in an honest heart, and lessen the comfort of a seasonable supply, I made him a present of the whole ; heartily wishing, that the same gracious God, who inclined a stranger's heart to bestow it, may also prosper his endeavours to im-

prove it. And if he often calls to remembrance that almighty power and goodness which made a few drops of oil at the bottom of a cruse, and a little handful of meal that was the gleanings of the barrel, a lasting support to the Prophet, and to the poor widow, and her son, I doubt not but that he will be enabled to fix his dependance upon the same everlasting Father, for needful success in trading. So that by God's blessing I hope, this little stock, frugally managed, may, through his kind providence, put him in a way of procuring necessities in this wilderness, till he comes to the fulness of the heavenly Canaan.

I think every instance of kindness shewn to us, or exercised by us, should enlarge our apprehensions of the divine benevolence. What is a grain of dust to the whole earth? What is a drop of water to the great ocean? or what are a few days to the countless ages of eternity? Less, unspeakably less is all created kindness, compared with the boundless goodness of God in Christ Jesus. For by him we have access to the father, being reconciled by his blood shed on the cross. We are adopted and received into the church, whereof Christ is the head. Being thus in the favour of God, he delighteth in hearing the prayer of faith, which those who believe in Christ daily put up to the throne of grace. Oh! how great is his loving-kindness and tender mercy. He is exalted, that he may have mercy upon all that call upon him in sincerity and truth. He waited to be gracious. He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not, for past ingratitude and great unworthiness. Oh! how great are these blessings which he giveth. Blessings, in comparison of which, silver is as clay, and gold as the mire of the streets. He giveth grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them who live a godly life; from them who are accepted in the beloved, and love him who first loved them. I shall add that charming declaration of the beloved disciple, and earnestly wish that we may learn by happy experience, and feel in our souls, what it means,—we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. Let me beg my dear friends to remember at the throne of grace,

Your affectionate Friend, &c

LETTER XV.

Weston-Facell, 1774.

Dear † † †.

I Promised † † † to send the remainder of her letter, in a few lines to you. Either she may transcribe from you, or you from her, in order to compleat the little essay.—I left off, I think, somewhere hereabouts.—*But spiritual interests are infinitely more valuable.* For those, therefore, Christ will provide more abundantly: if they want knowledge, he will not only give them his divine word, but his enlightening spirit, to lead them into all truth.—If they are poor, he will give them the fine gold of his obedience: he will say to them as the father said in the parable, son, all that I have is thine. Are they wounded? He will give them the healing balm of his precious blood; this will cure the wound which sin has made in the soul; and make the bones which have been broken, to rejoice. Are they naked? He will cloath them with the robe of his own righteousness; they shall appear before the God of Gods in the garments of this their elder brother. Are they weak? His strength shall be made perfect in their weakness; he will work in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. When they die he has provided a flight of angels to attend their departing souls, and conduct them to his own compassionate arms; he has provided mansions of glory, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, for their future reception. He has provided a fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore, for their final portion and inheritance.

Oh! what ample provision is here; this is indeed good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.—What can needy creatures want, which Jesus does not supply? Justly was it once said by an eminent believer,

Jehovah Jireh * : let this be the language of our hearts in all our needs.

The hen comforts her winter brood ; she screens them from the inclemencies of the weather. She spreads out her wings, and forms a canopy over them ; this affords them a house to lodge in and a bed to sleep on ; no velvet is softer, no blankets are warmer ; here they are cherished and refreshed ; here they find heat when they shiver with cold, are dried when they come dropping with wet.

Jesus also comforts his poor people ; he is called the consolation of *Israel* : come unto me, says the merciful Redeemer, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ; all ye that are weary, and I will refresh you. He is afflicted in all their afflictions, and is as ready to succour them, as a man is to allay the anguish of his own smarting flesh. He is the good, the inconceivably good shepherd, whose bowels yearn with the tenderest compassion, when his lambs are fatigued or distressed ; he even lays them in his bosom.—Every thing but Jesus speaks terror, and creates dismay to his little flock. But this compassionate shepherd leads them forth besides the waters of comfort. The world lays many a snare for their feet ; the world persecutes and hates them. In the world they must have tribulation ; but Christ says be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, and will make you partakers of my victory ; because I have conquered, ye shall conquer also. The law lays dreadful things to their charge ; the law is the ministration of condemnation ; the law thunders out threatenings : they are rebels, says that righteous law ; they have transgressed my precepts ; they deserve to suffer all the curses denounced against the disobedient and ungodly. But Christ gently whispers, be of good courage, my people, take sanctuary in your Mediator, I have answered all the demands of the law : if it requires punishment, I sustained torments unutterable ; if it insists on blood, I satisfied it with divine blood ; with every drop of my heart's blood ;

so that there is no condemnation to them that are interested in me. If it called for righteousness, I submitted to its authority ; I performed every jot and tittle of its commands, and thereby brought in a perfect and everlasting righteousness. Lay hold on my obedience ; receive this from my free grace, and the law has nothing more to charge against you ; for the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them that believe, though the devil tempts and distresses the children of Jesus.—He not only tempts but accuses them, aggravating and calling aloud for vengeance : cries down with them, down with them, even to the dust. But Jesus graciously steps in, baffles the accusation, arrests the judgment, and says, I have died to save them from going into the pit ; for I have found a ransom : if they have sinned, I have taken them upon myself ; if they have multiplied transgressions as the stars of heaven, my father hath laid on me the iniquities of them all. They are my redeemed ones ; they are bought with my blood. I cannot lose my purchase ; if they are not saved, I am not glorified.

Such sweet truths sent home upon the poor soul, must be very comfortable and restorative to the drooping sinner ; more refreshing and gladdening to the conscience, than the feathers of the hen are to her feeble starving brood.

Upon the whole, let us imitate the chickens, by trusting in Jesus for all we want or wish ; let us lean upon our beloved in all our progress through this wilderness ; expect to be furnished entirely out of his fulness ; look for protection from his almighty arm. Depend upon provision from his inexhaustible treasures ; and for comfort, from a growing sense of our interest in him.

Let this be the habitual language of our heart.—Blessed Lord, I am weak and wretched, surrounded by a multitude of dangers, and defiled by a thousand corruptions. Oh! defend me by the eternal power. Let thy almighty arm be ever over me. Let thy holy spirit be ever with me ; never leave me to my enemies ; never give me up to my own blindness and impotency, for I flee unto thee to hide me ; on thee I depend to break every snare of temptation that endangers me from without, to mortify every seed of corruption that pollutes me from within. I am poor and

needy, blessed Jesus, do thou provide for me. Since I must one day give an account of myself to God; let thy blood wash away my guilt, and drown all my transgressions.— Since I must, ere long, stand before him whose eyes are as a burning fire, Oh! cloath me with the robes of thy righteousness, the garments of salvation, that I may be holy and blameless in his sight. Since I must quickly die out of this miserable world, provide me an entrance into thine own everlasting kingdom; and while I continue in this world, provide me with grace sufficient for me, that I may live like thine elect, and adorn the gospel of God my Saviour.

I am often distressed; misgiving thoughts and anguish of mind nicks me hang down my heart like a bulrush. Thought of ar of death, and dread of eternal judgment, my joints are sometimes ready to smite one against another; but Oh! holy, and most merciful Saviour be thou my support. Pour the oil of gladness into my inner man; give me the joy of thy salvation: the law condemns me, but do thou justify me; my own conscience writes bitter things against me, but do thou whisper to my soul, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. The roaring lion often terrifies me; but thou good and faithful shepherd, let thyself comfort me. Let me know, and feel, that I am thine, and then nothing shall pluck me out of thy hands.

This was wrote before my late illness. You see from hence, that you my friends at *Biddeford*, have been on my thoughts, though they have not of late been addressed by way of letter; and I shall always say, that whether we are sick or in health, the Lord Jesus Christ may be the strength of our hearts, and our portion for ever.

I am &c.

JAMES HERVEY

LETTER XVI.

Dear —

IT is our duty continually to sing Hosanna to the king of *Israel*, who treadeth all enemies under his feet. He can tread them down like clay in the streets, or cast them out as lightning from heaven. Nothing is impossible to him; they who know Christ's faithfulness and truth, will put their trust in him; they will hang upon him every moment, as the feeble child in the arms of the indulgent mother, for grace to strengthen and enable them to withstand the devices of that enemy of souls, who is seeking every moment to destroy the weak believer, the babes in Christ. — Satan says, with that wicked one in *Erebus*, I will pursue them with inconceivable malice and rage, I will overtake and tear them in pieces like a lion; I will lay ten thousand snares in their way, and if it be possible, bring them under the dominion of sin, and after that into the damnation of hell. — The believer replies, thou wouldest effect this O thou enemy of all godliness. I know thou wouldest effect it with as much ease, as a feather is borne down by a sweeping whirlwind, was I left a moment to myself; but my strength do I ascribe unto my incarnate God. The blessed Jesus has undertaken for my security; he watches over me every moment, and nothing can pluck me out of his hands. He hath said, who shall disannul it, that sin shall not have dominion over me; he will preserve me by his almighty power unto salvation. Let all my adversaries know assuredly, that my safety is not in myself. — But as the hills stand round about *Jerusalem*, even so standeth the Lord round about his people, from this time forth for evermore.

Whoever attempts the ruin of a soul, that is staid on Jesus, must wrench the sovereignty from the hand of omnipotence, and cause unshaken faithfulness to fail. So long as all things in heaven and earth, and under the earth, do bow, and obey the lamb that was slain; so long as Christ

is a God unchangeable, and faithful that cannot lie, so long shall a poor feeble worm that trusts in him, be secure from apostacy and perdition. Oh the blessings, the comforts that spring from a right knowledge of Jesus! richer blessings I cannot wish! greater treasures I cannot enjoy nor possess. This, this alone is that knowledge which St. *Paul* valued above all other accomplishments or acquirements, in comparison of which, he counted all things else no better than dross or dung. Oh let my dear *Biddelord* friends beg of the father of lights to send out the spirit of wisdom and revelation, that I may be filled with the knowledge of him, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; and in return both they and you, my friends, may be assured of the most hearty and repeated prayers of

Your sincere friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XI.

Weston-Farell, November 16, 1745.

Sir,

IT is not easy to express the satisfaction I received from your agreeable and useful conversation this afternoon. I rejoice to find, that there are gentlemen of genius, learning, and politeness, who dare profess a supreme value for the scriptures, and are not ashamed of the cross of Christ. I congratulate you, dear Sir, on this occasion; and I cannot but look on a mind so principled, and a heart so disposed, as a very choice and distinguishing part of your happiness. Was I to frame a wish for the dearest and most valuable friend on earth, I would earnestly desire, that he might grow daily in this grace, and encrease in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And when

my pen begs leave to assure you, that this is my unfeigned wish for † † †. it only transcribes what is deeply written on my heart.

This brings the dedication and the preface, which are to introduce a little essay, entitled, *Meditations among the Tombs, and Reflections on a Flower Garden*, in two letters to a Lady. I hope, Sir, in consequence of your kind promise, you will please to peruse them with a file in your hand. The severity of the critic, and the kindness of the friend, in this case, will be inseparable. — The evangelical strain, I believe, must be preserved; because, otherwise, the introductory thoughts will not harmonize with the subsequent, the porch will be unsuitable to the building. — But if you perceive any incanness of expression, any quaintness of sentiment, or any other impropriety and inelegance, I shall acknowledge it as a very singular favor, if you will be so good as to discover and correct such blemishes.

I hope, Sir, my end in venturing to publish, is an hearty desire to serve in some little degree, the interests of christianity, by endeavouring to set some of its most important truths in a light, that may both entertain and edify. As I profess this view, I am certain, your affectionate regard for the most excellent religion imaginable will incline you to be concerned for the issue of such an attempt, and therefore to contribute to its success, both by bestowing your animadversions upon these small parts, and by speaking of the whole (when it shall come abroad) with all that candour which is natural to the christian, and will be so greatly needed by this new adventurer in letters, who is, &c.

JAMES HERVEY

LETTER XVIII.

Weston-Pavell, November 19, 1745,

Dear Sir,

I Cannot forbear making my grateful acknowledgements for your most obliging letter. You could not

possibly have imagined any thing more agreeable to my inclination, than the proposal you are pleased to make of admitting me to your acquaintance and conversation. I accept your kind offer, Sir, with thankfulness, with joy; and shall most gladly cultivate a friendship, which is not only perfectly innocent, but remarkably elegant and improving. Especially, since you are pleased to permit the discourse to turn upon those points, which it is my duty to study, and my delight to contemplate. Nor shall I forget, how much I am indebted to your condescension for this favour; but shall always bear a respectful sense of the distinguished rank, and superior abilities of my worthy friend.

Indeed I am particularly delighted with such interviews, as serve to enlarge our knowledge, and refine our affections; such as have an apparent tendency to render us more useful in our present stations, and to ripen us for future happiness; such was that which I lately enjoyed in your company. This is a feast of reason; a feast of truth; and, I must own, has charms for me, infinitely superior to all the impertinent amusements of modish chat, or the mean gratifications of the bottle.

When I have been asked to spend an afternoon with gentlemen of a learned education, and unquestionable ingenuity, I have fancied myself invited to take a turn in some beautiful garden; where I expected to have been treated with a sight of the most delicate flowers, and most amiable forms of nature: when, to my great surprise, I have been shewn nothing but the most worthless thistle, and contemptible weeds. To one who has so often been disappointed, it must be peculiarly pleasing to find the satisfaction which he has long sought in vain. This I make no doubt of obtaining, if I may be permitted to be a third person in the interview, when you and Mr. * * * sit together in social conference.

I beg leave to return my thanks for your ingenious remark upon a sentence in the essay towards a preface; and also to express my entire satisfaction in your motion for considering more attentively the spiritual interests of the poor patients in the hospital. At present, it is undeniably plain, that much more assiduous and effectual care is taken

of their temporal, than of their eternal welfare. With pleasure I shall join in concerting some proper method to rectify this misconduct, and with a real alacrity shall execute (as far as I shall be enabled) any expedient which you shall judge conducive to the recovery and health of their precious souls.

I almost repent, that my pen has intruded, perhaps, in the midst of important business, and stole so much of your valuable time. But now I have done:—and shall only repeat, what agreeable views I form from the prospect of your future acquiescence, and what an addition it will be to my happiness to be owned and regarded, as,

Your sincere friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XIX.

Weston-Fauzell, 1745.

Dear † † †.

THANKS to you, dear Sir, for your kind wishes. Blessed be the Divine Providence, I am now able to inform you, that what you wish is accomplished. I have had one of the most agreeable losses I ever met with; I have lost my indisposition, and am, in a manner, well.

I send herewith the Poem on christianity. The other books which you have been pleased to lend me, will follow by the first opportunity. I read Mr. Holson's performance with eagerness and delight. What is wrote by a valuable friend, has a kind of secret, unaccountable charm. It may not be preferable to other compositions, yet, methinks, it pleases more.

I congratulate you, Sir, and my country, on the good news received from the North. How do you like Stackhouse's History of the Bible? I am sure he has one advantage, superior to all the historians in the world. That the facts he relates are more venerable for their antiquity, more admirable for their grandeur and more important on account of their universal usefulness. I have often thought, that the Scripture is finely calculated to furnish out the most exquisite entertainment to the imagination, from those three principal sources mentioned by Mr. Addison, the great, the beautiful, and the new. But what is this compared with that infinitely noble benefit of making us wise unto salvation, of making us partakers of a divine nature?

LETTER XX.

Wotton-Faxell, December 17, 1745.

Sir,

I Admire your remarkable regard for truth, and that noble greatness of Soul, which seems to sacrifice conscience to interest, and cannot stoop to receive temporal honors on such ignoble terms. Your conduct reminds me of a most amiable peculiarity in the upright and religious man's character, as it is drawn by the inspired writers; with which you cannot but be particularly pleased, as it so exactly corresponds with your own; such a one, says the royal preacher, seareth an oath; such a one, adds the sweet singer of *Israel*, speaketh the truth from his heart.

The thirty-nine articles I have more than once subscribed, and as I continue steadfast in the belief of them, as you are pleased to ask my opinion relating to some seemingly exceptionable tenets contained in them, I must readily submit it to your consideration: not, Sir, in the capacity of a casuist, who would attempt a satisfactory answer to your

questions; but only under the notion of a sincere friend, who would freely disclose his whole soul, and entertain no one sentiment, but what should be communicated to a valuable acquaintance.

"*You are a good deal puzzled about the equality of the son with the father in Athanasius's sense.*"—I own, it is no wonder, that we should be somewhat staggered at this mysterious truth; especially if we indulge a wanton curiosity, and inquire after the *quomodo* of the doctrine, if nothing will content our busy minds, but a clear comprehension of this particular, they will never be brought to acquiesce in this article. But, if they dare venture to believe the express declarations of infinite wisdom, and wait till a future state for a full evolution of the mystery, their assent will soon be determined.

I once thought a very striking proof of this scriptural doctrine might be derived from properties of a mortal child, considered in comparison with the parent. Is not the son as perfect a portrait of all the constituent parts of the human nature as the father? Are not the children of this age possessed of the same endowments of body and mind, as their fathers in the preceding age? Whatever essential excellencies belong to the one, may with equal truth be predicated of the other. And if the son, in this our inferior world, be in all points equal to his progenitor, why should we not suppose, that the glorious son of God is equal in all respects, to his almighty father?

But I choose to forbear all such fond endeavours, to explain what, to our very limited apprehensions, is altogether inexplicable. I rather receive scripture for my teacher, and give up my sentiments to be formed and conducted by that infallible guide. In scripture there are abundances of texts, which, in the most explicit terms imaginable, assert the son to be God. Now if he be God, he cannot have any superior: inferiority evidently destroys divinity: inferiority, in any instance, is consistent with the notion of a supreme being. So that every text in scripture which ascribes a divine nature to the blessed Jesus, seems to speak all that *Athanasius* maintains, concerning the absolute, universal equality of the son with the father.

In what respects can the son be supposed inferior? Are not the same honors given to the son, as are paid to the father? The psalmist mentions two of the innumerable honors which are due to the supreme majesty. Both which, he declares, are and shall be addressed to the son; prayer shall be made ever unto him, and daily shall he be praised. This adorable person is the object of our worship throughout the whole litany. In the doxologies of our liturgy the same glory is ascribed to all the three infinitely exalted persons of the Trinity. I take notice of this, not as a conclusive argument, but only to hint at the uniform judgment of our reformers on this important head, and to point out their particular care to inculcate, with incessant assiduity, this belief upon the members of their communion.—Are not the same works ascribed to the son, as are ascribed to the father? God, the sovereign and supreme God, (according to the periphrasis of a Heathen poet, *Cui nihil simile, aut secundum*.) often declares his matchless perfections, by referring mankind to his astonishing works of creation. And is not the son the creator of the universe? All things were made by him, is the testimony of one apostle; and, he upholdeth all things by the word of his power, the deposition of another.—Is not the same incommunicable name applied to the son? Jehovah is allowed to be a name never attributed, throughout the whole scripture, to any being; but only to the one living and true God; who only hath immortality, who hath no superior, none like him in heaven or earth. But this title is the character of the incarnate son. If we compare *Moses* and *St. Paul*, we shall find that Christ is Jehovah, *Numb. xvi. 6.* with *1 Cor. x. 9.* This argument, I think, is not common; and, I must own, has had a great influence in settling my judgment, ever since I was apprised of it.—Another proof was suggested in the morning lesson for the day, *Isa. xlv. 23.* compared with *Phil. ii. 10.* It is the Lord in the prophet, that infinitely wise God who manifesteth, even from ancient time, the dark and remote events of futurity; who peremptorily declares, that there is no God besides him, consequently none superior in any degree to him; yet this most sacred

person, who in the prophet's text has the attributes of incomparable perfection and unshared supremacy, is, in the apostle's comment, the Redeemer.

I fancy all those texts of scripture, which seem to you, Sir, so diametrically opposite to this doctrine, will, upon a renewed examination, appear referable only to the humanity of our Saviour. If so, they cannot effect the point under debate, nor invalidate the arguments urged in its support.

After all, I believe, here lies the grand difficulty. Sonship, we take for granted, implies inferiority. Sonship implies the receiving of a being from another; and, to receive a being is an instance of inferiority.—But, dear Sir, let us repress every bold inquiry into this awful secret; lest that of the apostle, be the lightest censure we incur. What is right reasoning, when applied to the case of creating existence, is little less than blasphemy when applied to that divine person, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the great I AM.—The generation of the son of God is an unfathomable mystery. A prophet cries out with amaze, who can declare his generation? And if we cannot conceive it, how can we form any conclusions, or determine what consequences follow from it?—Here it becomes us not to examine, but to adore. If we know not how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, how shall we be able to state the nature, or explain the effects of a generation, inexpressibly more remote from our finite apprehensions?

Upon the whole; since the scripture has given us repeated and unquestionable assurances, that Christ is God; since common sense cries aloud against the absurdity of supposing a God, who has a superior; shall we reject such positive evidences of revelation, and be deaf to the strongest remonstrances of our reason, merely because we cannot conceive, how the sonship of the Redeemer can be compatible with an absolute equality, in all possible perfection to the Father?

It need not be hinted to * * *, that this doctrine of the divinity, consequently of the equality, of the sacred tri-une,

is not merely a speculative point, but has a most close connection with practice ; and is admirably fitted to influence our lives, in the most powerful and endearing manner. That it is no less inseparably connected with the grand blessings of acquittance from the guilt, and delivery from the bondage of sin ; blessings of unutterable and infinite value, without which the children of men are of all creatures most miserable ; which yet we cannot reasonably hope to enjoy, if any of those illustrious persons concerned in accomplishing the great redemption, be supposed less than divine.

The 18th article, you add, is " another objection to me, " which begins thus, They also are to be had accursed, " &c."—This, as you observe, seems harsh. Yet the harshness is not ours, but the Apostle's. I imagine, this is no more than a transcript of St. Paul's awful and solemn declaration, transmitted to the Galatian converts, and denounced against their corrupting teachers. Be pleased, Sir, to peruse attentively that whole inspired letter, and especially to consider, chap. i, verses 6, 7, 8, 9. Then permit me to appeal to yourself, whether our article professes any doctrine, which is not clearly established in that most excellent epistle ; or whether our church uses more severe terms, than the Apostle thinks proper to thunder out, in that memorable passage ?—But might not this doctrine be palliated a little, or the tremendous sanction somewhat softened ? No ; we must not add to, or diminish from, our inviolable rule. A faithful steward of the divine mysteries, must declare the whole will of God, in its full extent and latitude ; together with the fearful consequences of presumptuously opposing it, as well as the blessed effects of cordially receiving it.

I am not surprised, that this procedure startles some, offends others. St. Paul seems to have foreseen this event ; and therefore apologizes for himself, shall I say ? rather declares

peace

from

that to threaten the divine anathema on every opposer of

this doctrine, will be still more offensive. But shall I desist on these considerations? Shall I accommodate the standard doctrines of heaven to the depraved taste of the age; or be solicitous to make them square with the favourite schemes of human device, only to avoid creating disgust in some minds? No, verily: I preach what unerring wisdom has revealed, not what capricious man has dreamed, and therefore dare not vary one jot or tittle from my high orders. My business is principally to please God by a faithful discharge of my commission, not to ingratiate myself with men, by modelling my doctrine in conformity to their humours; and therefore I must, I must deliver it, just as I received it.

But why do I offer to illustrate these texts? Your own Meditations, I persuade myself, will discern, much more clearly than I can represent, that the compilers of our articles are no other than the echo of St Paul: or rather that they only set their seal to the doctrines of Christ, which he taught; and approve that verdict of heaven, which he has brought in. This consideration will acquit them from the charge of harshness of expression, or uncharitableness of sentiment.

Your objections thus proceed. "I believe that every one will be saved, who acts up to the best of his knowledge."—I almost durst venture to join issue with my friend upon this footing; and undertake to prove, from this very position, the universal necessity of believing in Christ for salvation. Because, I think, it is indisputably certain, that there is no man living who has in all points acted up to his knowledge. And if he has swerved, in any instance, from his known acknowledged duty, how shall he escape punishment, without an atonement? *Videb meliora, proboque deteriora sequor*, is what the most vigilant and upright of mortals have at some unhappy moments, felt to be true. If so, how shall they stand before that righteous God, who will not acquit the guilty, without an interest in the great expiation?—But, I presume, your proposition is to be taken in a more qualified sense; it means, that those who sincerely, though not perfectly, in the main course of their life, and

as far as the infirmities of a frail nature will admit, act up to their knowledge ; that these shall be saved, even without their application to the merits of a Saviour. It this opinion be true, I own, it must be very unsafe to subscribe our articles.

Your sense of the 23th article is exactly mine. " The authority you mention, is, in my opinion, all the authority which the church, can reasonably claim, in matters relating to faith." These rulers have power, as you justly observe, to settle, in conformity with what they conclude to be the meaning of scripture ; and none, I think, can fairly deny them a right to determine, what points of belief shall be the indispensable terms of enjoying communion with their society.

But I must not, I dare not, close, without acting as becomes a minister of the gospel ; without reminding my valuable friend, that the inspiration of the Almighty giveth wisdom ; that a man can receive nothing, much less an acquaintance with the mysteries of the Redeemer's kingdom, unless it be given him from above. To this fountain of wisdom, and Father of lights, let us make humble, earnest, daily application. Then shall " we see the things that belong to our peace ;" and as it is most emphatically expressed by the sacred penman, " Know the truth as it is in Jesus."

I am, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXI.

Weston-Favell, Jan. 10. 1745-6.

Sir,

How anxious, and how momentous, is the task you have assigned me ! a sense of its difficulty and importance almost deterred me from venturing, so much as to attempt it. A cordial friendship instigated, and a consciousness of my own incapacity checked, for some time, my fluctuating mind. At length the bias inclined to the side of the former ; my reluctance, urged by the request of a friend, gives way ; and now I am fully determined.—Determined, to what ? To enter the lists against the adversaries of the trinity ? more particularly to appear as the champion for the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost ? With a view of resting the grand debate on the dexterity of this pen ? No ; Sir, I form no such romantic schemes ; I renounce any such undertaking ; I am only determined to lay before you the thoughts which have occurred, since I received your last letter ; and this, on the condition of having them returned to the secrecy of my closet, after you have passed your judgment, and bestowed your corrections upon them.

In managing this controversy, shall I say ? or rather in pursuing this enquiry, it behoves us humbly to apply to the Father of lights for direction. They shall all be taught of God, says the Prophet ; this promise we should humbly plead at the throne of grace, and in cheerful dependence on its accomplishment, proceed to examine, with a modest and reverential awe, the mysterious points before us. Whoever rejects this key, and yet hopes to be admitted into the treasures of the heavenly knowledge, acts altogether as imprudent a part, as if he should expect to attain a mastery

skill in mathematics, and at the same time neglect to inform himself of the first principles of that admired science. When a divine person is the object of our consideration, then surely it becomes us, in a more especial manner, not to lean to our own understanding, but, like little children, to rely on the teachings of that all-wise spirit, whose nature, dignity, and attributes, we would devoutly contemplate.—You will, perhaps, take notice, that I anticipate what is to be proved; and take it for granted that the Holy Ghost is indeed God. I would only observe from this remark, how naturally we wish, how almost unavoidably we conclude, that person to be really God, who is appointed to lead us into all truth.

Let us now Sir, if you please, address ourselves to the enquiry, whether the holy spirit is a real person,—whether that person is very God,—and these particulars being discussed, it may be proper to examine briefly the most material of Mr. Tofakins's objections.—But to whom, to what shall we apply, in order to find the satisfaction we seek? to reason, and her naked, unassisted dictates? Hardly can reason guess aright with relation to the things that are before our eyes; much less can she determine with any certainty, concerning the unsearchable depths of the divine nature. We have in the word of revelation an infallible oracle. To this let us direct our search. To the decision of this unerring standard, let us inviolably adhere; however it may surpass our comprehension, or run counter to our fond prepossessions.

Here we may possibly ask, is not the spirit of God, by a common metonymy, put for God himself?—I own I have sometimes been inclined to hesitate on this question. When it is said, my spirit shall not always strive with man, and grieve not the holy spirit of God: I have never thought these passages a sufficient proof of the personality of the blessed spirit, though (if I mistake not) commonly urged in support of the doctrine. These, I apprehend, might fairly be interpreted of grieving God himself, and rejecting the tender gracious overtures of his mercy.

Again; perhaps the spirit of the Lord may be nothing more than a particular modification or exercise of a divine

power resident in the Deity. For instance, when it is said, in the prophetic language, not by might, nor by force, but by my spirit, with the Lord : or, by the evangelical historian, the Holy Ghost was upon him. Are not these texts nearly equivalent, in point of signification, to those scriptural expressions, the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass, the inspiration of the Almighty, giveth understanding. Is not this the meaning of the former passage. Not mortal strength, but God's omnipotent aid giveth victory in the battle, and success in every undertaking : and this the import of the latter, the communications of infinite wisdom enlightened his mind in an extraordinary manner.

Were there no other scriptures, which concerned themselves in this debate, I should be ready to give up the point. Our Lord's famous reply to the Seducers, must for ever silence such a suggestion. And this we may further learn from his method of arguing, that it is not only proper, but our duty, to deduce truths, by fair consequences, which the text may not explicitly speak.

Be pleased, Sir, to consider the apostolical benediction, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all. If we allow the Apostle to understand the true import of language, must it not follow from this passage, that the Holy Spirit is a real person, and distinct from the father and the son ? Otherwise, would not the sacred writer, might not the sacred writer to have expressed himself in a different manner ; to have said rather, the fellowship of his, or the fellowship of their spirit ?—The form of administering baptism is another text of this nature : In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. It is evident ; I believe, it is allowed by all, that the two first are real distinct persons, and is there not equal reason to conclude, that the last mentioned is a person also ? Suppose you should endeavour to distinguish three persons in your discourse, what other language would you use than this ?—I dare say, Sir, you are sensible, that one scripture proof, if plain in its signification, and incontrovertible in its evidence

is as valid, as decisive, as one thousand. Because one such proof bears the stamp of infallible wisdom and infinite veracity. Therefore, was there no other hint in all the inspired volumes, but these pregnant words which compose the form of baptism, this single proof would be sufficiently satisfactory to my judgment.

I shall take leave to refer you to a few more evidences, and transcribe only the following : there are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Logos, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. But this, we are told, is a surreptitious text ; foisted by the bigotted espousers of a certain favourite set of doctrines.—The only resource this of our opposers, when their case becomes desperate, when conviction flashes in their faces ; then the pretence of spurious, and interpolated reading is trumped up. It is not to be found, they cry, in some very antient copy ; perhaps, the Alexandrine MS. acknowledges no such passage. But this I must be allowed to question : I dare not take our adversaries bare word ; especially since some of the declared enemies of orthodoxy are not the most exemplary for truth and integrity. However, granting that there may be no such text in the Alexandrine MS. for my part, I should not scruple to abide by the universal testimony of all editions, in all countries, much rather than to give up myself implicitly to the authority of a single MS. I should think it much more reasonable to conclude, that the transcriber of that particular copy, had, through oversight, dropt some sentence, rather than to charge all the other copies with forgery, and the editions of all ages with a gross mistake. Consider, Sir, not only the apparent difficulty, but the moral impossibility of corrupting the sacred books in that palpable manner, which this objection would insinuate ; at a time, when every private christian valued them more than life, and spent no day without a diligent contemplation of them ; at a time, when each particular sect read them constantly in their public assemblies, and watched the genuineness of each text with a most jealous eye. It would be an easy matter to introduce a supposititious clause into an ordinary will, after it had been solemnly proved at Dec-

tors Commons, and one authentic copy preserved in the archives? If this is scarce possible, how much unlikely is it, that any one should be able to practice so iniquitously upon the inspired writings, when not one only, but unnumbered copies were deposited in the most vigilant hands, and dispersed throughout the world?

I shall only desire you to consult these other scriptures, *Rom. xv. 16, 29. John xvi. 13, 14, 15.* which, without heaping together a multitude of other proofs, seem to put the matter beyond all rational doubt. In the last of those places, you will take particular notice, that the writer speaks of the Holy Ghost in the masculine gender. How could this consist with propriety of style, upon any other scheme than ours? The expression should have been *it*, not *he*, if the Holy Ghost were a divine energy alone, and not a real person. This, I think, is an observation of some consequence; and, therefore, accurate writers should beware of using the word *it*, and rather choose the pronoun *him*, when speaking of this divine being.

The mention of divine being reminds me of our second subject of enquiry, viz. whether the Holy Ghost is very God?—Here I should be glad to know, what kind or degree of evidence will satisfy the inquirers. If we are so far humble and impartial as to prefer the declarations of an unerring word, to the preconceptions of our mind; I think, there is most sufficient proof afforded by the scriptures.—Whereas, if we bring not these dispositions to the search, it will be no wonder, if we are bewildered; if we are given up to our own delusions; nay, it will be no incredible, no unprecedented thing for God to hide these mysteries from such (in their own opinion) wise and prudent ones, while he reveals them to (men endued with the simplicity and teachableness of) babes.

Is that being truly God, who is possessed of divine attributes? This question, I imagine, every body will answer in the affirmative. So that if it appears, that the Holy Ghost is invested with the incommunicable attributes of the deity, our quest will be won, and our dispute at an end.—Is it not the prerogative of the all-seeing God, to search

the heart, and try the reins? *Jer.* xvii. 10. and is not this the undoubted prerogative of the blessed spirit? *1 Cor.* ii. 10.—Is eternity an attribute of God, and of God only? *Deut.* xxxii. 27. *1 Tim.* vi. 16. This is clearly the property of the Holy Ghost, who is styled by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, the eternal spirit, *Heb.* ix. 14.—Is wisdom, undervalued, essential wisdom, a character of God? *Jude* 25. This is the illustrious character of the Holy Ghost. He is the spirit of wisdom and revelation, *Eph.* i. 17. In consequence of which sacred excellency, he is able to lead his people into all truth.—Is omnipresence a necessary proof of divinity? If so, the Holy Ghost challenges it upon this claim, for thus saith the inspired poet, whither shall I go then from thy spirit, *Psal.* cxviii. 7.—Is omnipotence a sufficient attestation of the God-head of the Holy Ghost? He that enabled mortals to controul the powers, to alter the course, to supersede the fundamental laws of nature, can he be less than the Lord God Almighty? Yet St. Paul declares, that his ability to work all manner of astonishing miracles, for the conformation of his ministry, was imparted to him by the spirit. *Rom.* xv. 19.—If any farther proof is demanded, be pleased to consider, with an unprejudiced attention, that very memorable passage, *Matt.* xii. 28, 29. Surely, from an attentive consideration of this text, we must be constrained to acknowledge, that the Holy Ghost is strictly and properly God. Otherwise, how could the sin against him be of so enormous a nature, so absolutely unpardonable, and the dreadful cause of inevitable ruin?—St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, (vi. 19.) addresses his converts with this remarkable piece of instruction, your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. The same apostle, writing to the same believers, in his second epistle, (vi. 16,) has the following expression, ye are the temples of the living God. Who can compare these texts, and yet be so hardy as deliberately to deny, that the Holy Ghost, and the living God are God and the same? Besides, if these two scriptures, viewed in conjunction with each other, did not ascertain the divinity of the blessed spirit, the very purport of the expression, ye are temple of the

Holy Ghost, sufficiently evinces it. It is certain, that the very essence of a temple, or to speak in the terms of the logician, the *differentia constitutiva* of a temple, consists in the residence of a deity. The inhabitation of the highest created being cannot constitute a temple; nothing but the indwelling of the one infinite, almighty Lord God. Since therefore, the indwelling of the holy spirit renders the bodies of christians temples, it seems to be a clear case, that he is truly God. — Another text, a text never omitted when this point is under debate, and a text, in my opinion, singly sufficient to give a final decision to the doubt, is in Acts v, 3. 1. Now, can we imagine, that an Evangelist, under the guidance of unerring wisdom, could write with such unaccountable inaccuracy as the deniers of this article must maintain? Were this supposition admitted, I should almost begin to question the inspiration of the sacred books. At this rate, they would seem calculated to confound the judgment, and elude the common sense of the readers. For, to speak so frequently of the father, the son, and the Holy Ghost, — to speak in such language as we always use in distinguishing various persons, — to ascribe to them severally such attributes as, by universal acknowledgement, comport only with the supreme God, — nay, to call each person by himself, distinctly, expressly to call each person God and Lord. — Sure, if after all these declarations, there be not three persons in the one, incomprehensible Godhead; if each of these illustrious persons be not very God, — what can we say, but that the scriptures are inconsistent and self-contradictory pieces. — So that, upon the whole, we are reduced to this dilemma, either to admit this absurd and impious charge upon the scriptures; or else to acknowledge the personality and divinity of the three persons in the adorable Trinity.

But perhaps, a curious genius, that has been accustomed to enter deep into the rationale of things; that thinks it beneath his sagacious inquirer to credit, unless he can comprehend, — such a genius may ask, with a kind of amazement, how can these things be? — Here I pretend to give no satisfaction. Here I confess myself at a loss, I cannot

conceive how the principle of gravitation acts, or what constitutes the power of attraction. If I cannot penetrate the hidden qualities of a thousand common objects, that daily present themselves to my senses; no wonder, that I should be unable to unravel the awful secrets of the divine nature; no wonder that I should be incapable of finding out to perfection that infinite majesty, who dwells in light inaccessible.

I should now proceed, according to the ability which the great source of wisdom may please to bestow, to examine Mr. Tomkin's criminal inquiry; but this is what my time, claimed by a variety of other engagements, will not permit; and what, I presume, you yourself, tired already by a tedious epistle, will very readily excuse. Hereafter if you insist upon my executing the plan, laid down in the beginning of this paper, I will communicate my remarks (such as they are) relating to the fore-mentioned treatise, with all that cheerful compliance, and unreserved openness, which may most emphatically bespeak me, dear Sir,

I am &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXII.

Weston-Favell, February 11, 1743;

Dear Sir,

I Received your ticket some time ago, in which you desire me to consider some particular passages of scripture. After an afflictive indisposition, which confined me to my room several days, I have examined the terms you alledge. They relate, I find, to that grand question, which has lately been the subject of our debate, The divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.—I could have wished, that the contro-

versy had been brought, to a satisfactory and happy issue. Very unwilling to engage in it a second time, I must beg leave to sue for my *Bene decessit*, and resign the management of so important a dispute to incomparably more able hands.—However, in obedience to your request, (*quid enim A me sit de negandum?*) I shall briefly lay before you my opinion concerning those portions of inspired wisdom; and then proceed, in pursuance of my promise, to weigh, with calmness and impartiality, the most material of Mr. Toulmin's objections.

"*You observe, that the father is never represented yielding obedience to Christ, or praying to Christ.*"—I acknowledge the truth of the remark, and assign this clear and obvious reason, because it was the peculiar office of the second person of the Trinity to humble himself, to unite himself to flesh and blood, and to be made in all things like unto us, save sin excepted. Had not the blessed Jesus been clothed with our nature, and partook of our innocent infirmities, we should never have heard any such thing, as his yielding obedience, or praying to another, greater than himself. This results not from his essential, but his assumed nature. Nor is it at all repugnant to reason, to be inferior in one character, and at the same time absolutely equal in another. His Majesty King George may be inferior to the emperor, in the capacity of elector of *Hannover*; he may be subject to the imperial authority, as he is a prince of the *Germanic* body; and yet equal to the most illustrious monarchs, obnoxious to no earthly jurisdiction, in his nobler quality of *King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland*. This seems to be a very easy and natural solution of the difficulty. Whereas, I think, I may venture to defy the nicest metaphysician, or the most acute casuist, to reconcile the notions of divinity and inferiority. As well may contradictions be made compatible. A God, who is inferior, is, to my apprehension, a perfect paradox. It is necessarily implied in the idea of God, that he be, as our old translation of the *Psalms* very emphatically and beautifully styles him, the most high.

Therefore, our Saviour, who often asserts his claim to divinity, declares, as an inseparable consequent of this high prerogative, all things which the father hath, are mine. Is the father's existence inconceivable and eternal? the same also is the son's. Has the father an unequalled absolute supremacy? such likewise hath the son.

But I see "*you have ready at hand to object, my father is greater than I.*"—(John xiv. 28.) Who are we to understand by the person I? Doubtless, that being who was capable of going and coming; who was sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; now with the disciples on earth, anon separated from them by a translation into heaven. And who can this be but the man Christ Jesus; the human nature of our Redeemer? The attribute of limited locality, determines this point with the utmost clearness. Why then should any one apply that property to the Godhead of our blessed master, which he himself so plainly appropriates to his manhood?

This text very opportunely furnishes us with a key, to enter into the true meaning of your next quotation, 1 Cor. vi. 9. The head of Christ is God. Only let St. John be allowed to expound St. Paul. I ask this single concession from my worthy friend, (and sure it is no unreasonable one,) let us agree to pay a greater deference to the beloved disciple's comment, than to Mr. Pierce's paraphrase, or the interpretation of the Arian creed; then the sense will be as follows: the God is the head of the mediator. As the members are conducted by the head, and subservient to the head; so Christ Jesus, in his human capacity, acted and acts subordination to the Godhead; obeying the significations of His will, and referring all his administrations to His glory. This exposition, I imagine, the context corroborates and the scope of the apostle's arguing requires.

As for Heb. i. 8, 9. this text affirms, in the most express terms, that Christ is God. And what can be a stronger proof of His unvalled supremacy and sovereignty?—But perhaps, this may be one of those places, in which, we are misled by our objectors, the word God signifies no more than a King, or a Father, consequently, does not prove our Re-

deemer to be God in reality, and by nature; but only to be complimented with this appellation, in respect of his office and authority—I believe, Sir, you will find, upon a more attentive inquiry, that this subtile distinction is contrary to the perpetual use of the scriptures. A very celebrated critic observes, that wherever the name *Elohim* is taken in an absolute sense, and restrained to one particular person (as it is in the true passage before us) it constantly denotes the true and only God. Magistrates are indeed said to be *Elohim*, in relation to their office, but no one magistrate *was* ever so called; nor can it be said, without blasphemy, to any one of them, thou art *Elohim*, or God. It was so called of Moses, though art *Elohim*, yet not absolutely, but relatively only, a God to Pharaoh, and to Achan, &c. In God's stead, doing in the name of God what he commanded, and declared what he revealed.—Beside, does not the Apostle in this very chapter, verse 10, address the following acknowledgment to Christ, thou Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. And is not the work of creation the unshared prerogative and honor of the Supreme God? This I am pretty sure of, it is the prerogative of that God, to whom the worship of the saints, under the old Testament, is directed; of that God, who has declared himself jealous of his honor, and resolves not to give his glory to another. Melchisedec made this illustrious being the object of his adoration, blessed be the most high God; possessor of heaven and earth. The day is thine, and the night is thine: thou hast prepared the light and the sun; was judged by the Psalmist one of the noblest ascriptions of praise which could be made to the Deity. Jonah has left us a confession of his faith, and an abstract of his devotion, in the following words; I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land. Yet St. Paul assures us, that this great creator and proprietor in heaven and earth; this object of divine worship in all ages of the ancient church, is he.—Now can we view the magnificent system of the universe, the immensity of its extent, the vast variety of its parts, the inimitable accuracy of

structure, the perfect harmony of its motions, together with the astonishing energy and effects of its mechanic powers, — can we contemplate this world of wonders, and withhold ourselves a single moment from ascribing the glory of incomparable wisdom, and matchless perfections to its maker? Can we glance an eye, or start a thought, through that ample field of miracles, which nature in all her scenes regularly exhibits, and still conclude, that the author of all takes too much upon him, when he advances the following claim?

—————None I know
Second to me, or like, equal much less.

MILBURN.

Possibly, our sceptical gentlemen are ready to reply, "We are far from denying that Christ made the world, but we suppose, he made it only as a ministerial being; not by any sufficiency of his own, but by a power delegated to him from the infinite Godhead." — But sure the abettors of this opinion never considered that emphatical passage*. By whatever artful evasion they think to elude the force of the former expression, I cannot see what possible escape they can contrive from the latter. It is plain from the philosophical principles of an Apostle, that the universe was formed by Christ as the almighty artificer, for Christ as its final end, and is not this a demonstration, that Christ was not a mere instrument, but the grand, glorious, self-sufficient agent; the alpha, and omega of all things?

After all that has been said upon this text, will it be imagined, that I have been partial in my examination of it? That the sentence, which most particularly favours your opinion, shall look with the most favourable aspect on mine is passed over without notice? Namely, where it is taught, that God anointed Christ with the oil of gladness above his

fellows *. I reply, by owning, that these words most undeniably imply inferiority: they imply a state of ignorance, which ~~implies~~ something, it has not naturally; a state of impotence, which receives from another, what it cannot convey to itself. Surely then, this clause must, according to all the laws of just interpretation, be referred to that nature which admitted of such wants, and I was subject to such infirmities. To ascribe it to that nature, which is characterized as God, would be almost as affronting to reason, as it is to the deity. — It is farther observable, that the very expression limits the sense to that capacity of our Redeemer, in which others stood related to him as his fellows. And can this be any other than the human? — Let me add one word more, before I dismiss this inquiry. Suppose I was to shift sides in the dispute, and turn the tables upon the disciples of Arius. Gentle men, since you take so much pains to prove the inferiority of our Lord Jesus Christ, permit me to try, if I cannot out shoot you in your own bow. I will undertake to shew, on your own principles, that he was inferior to millions of created beings. For this I have the positive and sure evidence of scripture, we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels †. — These gentlemen, I verily think, would have so much regard for the honor of a person on whom their everlasting all depends, as to answer with some becoming spirit; you are to distinguish between what our Saviour was made occasionally, and what he was originally. Though his human nature was taken from a class of beings lower in dignity than the angels, yet his nobler and more exalted nature was greatly superior to them all. — Now, Sir, as we must have recourse sometimes to this distinction, our adversaries themselves being our judges and our precedent, why should we not carry it along with us continually. Without it, a multitude of texts appear perplexed in their meaning, and clash with other scriptures; with it, they drop their obscurity, are disentangled from their intricacy, and harmonize entirely with the whole of holy scripture.

* Heb. i. 3.

† Heb. i. 6.

"*Another scripture pointed out for consideration is, 1. Cor. xv. 28.*" This, I confess, is a difficult, and admitting it was (to me at least) an unintelligible passage, nay, directly repugnant to my hypothesis—what would be a rational procedure in this case? To renounce my faith, because I cannot reconcile it with one scripture, though it stands supported by a copious multiplicity of others? If, in debating on any question, there be five hundred ayes, and but one no, I appeal to the conduct of the honorable house of commons, whether it be reasonable, that the point should be carried by the single negative, in opposition to so vast a majority of affirmatives? However, the state of our doctrine is not so bad, nor this text so diametrically opposite to it, as to destroy all hopes of establishing it with a nerve contradicente.—The apostle affirms, that, at the consummation of terrestrial things, when the state of human probation ends, and the number of the elect is completed, then shall the son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him; that God may be all in all, &c. according to my judgment, the son, at the commencement of that grand revolution, will entirely resign the administration of his mediatorial kingdom; he will no longer act as an advocate or intercessor, because the reasons, on which this office is founded, will cease for ever; he will no longer as a high priest, plead his atoning blood in behalf of sinners, nor as a king dispense the succours of his sanctifying grace, because all guilt will be done away, and the actions of corruption be at an end: he will no longer be the medium of his people's access to the knowledge and enjoyment of the father, because then they will stand perpetually in the beautiful presence, and see face to face, know even as they are known,—I may probably mistake the meaning of the words; but whatever shall appear to be their precise signification, this I think, is so clear as not to admit of any doubt, that it relates to an incarnate person; relates to him, who died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. And

can the surrender of all authority made by the man Jesus Christ, be any bar to his unlimited equality as God?

"You refer me to Psal. viii. 5. lxxxii. 1, 6. Exod. xxii. 28, and add, these texts prove that God signifies in some places king or ruler."—I acknowledge, that the word Elohim, in the aforesaid passages, signifies no more than angels, kings or rulers. But is this a demonstration, that the word Jehovah, the incommunicable name signifies no more than an angel, a king, or a ruler? This is the conclusion our adversaries are to infer: this the point they are to make good, otherwise, their attempts drop short of the mark, fly wide from their purpose. Because it is plain from incontestible authorities, that Jesus is Jehovah. This was hinted in a former letter; and, if you please to compare Isa. vi. 3, with John xii. 41. you will find another convincing evidence, that the Jehovah of the *Jews* is the Jesus of the *christians*.—Besides, in all those places, where the term God is used to denote some created being, invested with considerable authority, or possessed of considerable dignity, the connection is such, as absolutely to exclude the person, so denominated, from any title to a divine nature; whereas, when the name God is applied to the second person of the trinity, it is connected with such consequents or antecedents, as necessarily include the idea of divinity and supremacy. For instance, when the apostle recognizes the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in those remarkable words, *Rom. ix. 5.* Who is God, lest this idle piece of sophistry should have any room for admittance, he adds a most determining clause, over all, blessed for ever.—I have called it idle sophistry, for really it is nothing else. Only observe the process of the pretended argument, and you yourself will allow it no better an appellation.

What is designed for the argument runs thus: Because rulers of distinction have sometimes the title of Elohim, therefore Jesus, who has the title of Jehovah, is not very God, but only a ruler of distinction; or, the word of God, when necessarily determined by the context to some subordinate being, signifies a subordinate being; therefore, the word God, when necessarily determined by the context to

signify the supreme God, does not signify the supreme God, but only some subordinate being.—These are the mighty reasonings; such the formidable artillery, with which the adherents of Arius attack the divinity and equality of our Saviour. May the arms of our foreign enemies, and intestine rebel, be made, in their kind, of such metal, consist of such strength! and I may venture to address my countrymen in *David's* encouraging language, let no man's heart fail, because of them.

I hope it will not be objected, that I have sometimes mistook the particular point to be discussed, and confounded the divinity of our Lord with his equality to the father.—I own, I have not been scrupulously careful to preserve any such distinction, because I am persuaded it is perfectly chimerical. Whoever admits the former, grants the latter.—The one cannot subsist without the other, or rather, they are one and the same thing. To be equal with the father is to be divine, and to be divine, is to be equal with the father.—An inferior deity, was a notion that passed current in the Heathen world, but we have not so learned the divine nature, as to adopt it into our creed. It is a proposition that confutes itself. The predicate and subject are self-contradictory. God certainly means a being of incomparable, unparalleled glory and perfection. No one will dare to give a lower definition of the godhead.—Yet this the first term of the sentence affirms, the second denies. I then proceed to examine, whether the divine names, attributes; those which are incommunicably divine, are the sole prerogative of the unequalled God? My reason, in her sedatest moments, assures me, that scripture cannot deceive, though I may be able to conceive. My reason declares, that I shall be a rebel against her laws, if I do not submit to this determination of scripture, as decisive, as infallible.

Yours, &c.

JAMES HENRY.

LETTER XXIII.

*Weston-Favell, March, 1745-6.**Sir,*

IN a former letter, I considered, whether the blessed spirit is really a distinct person—whether this person is truly and properly God—it appeared from a variety of scriptures, that both these questions were to be resolved in the affirmative. These preliminaries being settled, I would hope, with some perspicuity of reason and strength of argument; I now proceed, in consequence of my engagement, to examine Mr. Tomkins's objections against the received custom of addressing divine worship to this divine being.

The author, I freely acknowledge, writes with a great appearance of integrity; with a calm and decent spirit of controversy; and with a very plausible air of truth. As the subject of his enquiry is of the highest dignity and importance, as his method of managing the debate is, to say the least, by no means contemptible, I cannot forbear expressing some surprize, that none of the ingenious dissenters, to whom the piece is particularly inscribed, have thought proper to interest themselves in the dispute, and either confute what is urged, or else (like persons of that inviolable attachment to the pure-scriptural worship which they profess) recede from the use of their allowed doxologies.

For my part, as I firmly believe it a proper practice to worship the son, as we worship the father, and to worship the Holy Ghost, as we worship the other persons of the undivided trinity, I am so far from disapproving, that I admire our customary doxology, and think it a very noble and instructive part of our sacred service. Noble, because it ex-

libits one of the grand mysteries and glorious peculiarities of the gospel; instructive, because it so frequently reminds the worshipper of a point which it so greatly concerns him to believe, and which is fitted to inspire the brightest, the strongest hopes, of final, of complete salvation.

But lest this persuasion should be deemed the crude production of early prejudice, rather than the mature fruit of sedate consideration, we will very readily hear whatever can be alledged against it; and not willingly secrete one objection, or misrepresent one argument, occurring in the enquiry.

"Let it be supposed, says our author, that the holy spirit is one of the persons of the godhead; I still query, what warrant christians have for a direct and distinct worship of this third person in the godhead," (pag. 1.)—I should think, there can be no reasonable doubt, whether worship is to be paid to the divinity. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, is a law of incontestable authority, and eternal obligation.—As for the circumstances of worship included in its being direct, this cannot alter the case, nor render the practice improper. According to my apprehension, all true and genuine worship is direct. If it be addressed to the divine object at second hand, it has more of the nature of idolatry, than worship. Such is the religious foppery of the Papists, who will not apply directly to the father of everlasting compassions, but adore God as it were by proxy.—With regard to the distinctness of the worship, this depends entirely upon the scripture's distinguishing their persons. If this be clearly done, the distinctness of worship is properly authorized, and the fitness of it follows of course. If the inspired writers assure us, that the father is God, this is a sufficient warrant to pay divine honors to the father. If the inspired writers affirm, that the son is God, this is a sufficient ground for ascribing divine honors to the son. If the same inspired writers declare, that the holy ghost is God, we need no clearer warrant, nor can we have a louder call, to pay him our devoutest homage.—In a word, it is the voice of reason, it is the command of scripture, it is sounded on the unalterable relations of things, that worship, direct worship,

distinct worship, all worship, be rendered to the deity.— So that the divinity of the holy ghost, exclusive of any apostolical precept or example, is an incomparably better reason for ascribing divine honors to this sacred person, than the bare want of such precept or example, can be a reason to justify the omission, or condemn the performance of it.

I am no advocate for implicit faith in any human determination or opinion. Should I see whole sects, or whole churches, in a glaring error, such as I can prove from scripture to be palpably wrong, and of pernicious tendency, I would make no scruple to remonstrate, dissent, and enter my protest. But in a case, which Mr. Tomkins himself (page 8. line 19.) allows to be of a dubious nature; where I have no positive proof from God's holy word, that the practice is unlawful, or improper; I cannot but apprehend, that it becomes a modest person, diffident of his own judgment, to acquiesce in the general, the long continued usage of all the churches.—This is urged by an inspired writer as a forcible motive for rejecting a practice, and why should not I admit it as a motive of weight for adhering to a practice? We have no such custom, neither the churches of God*, was an apostolical argument. And, in an instance, where we are not precluded by any prohibition of scripture, I think, the reasoning is equally conclusive, if changed to the affirmative, we have such a custom, and the churches of God.—Was I to settle my opinion, and adjust my conduct, with regard to such a point, I should be inclined to argue in the following manner: I cannot bring one text from the sacred writings, which forbids the usage; and as it is unanimously practised by devout persons of almost every denomination; as it has been the received, the uninterrupted practice of the christian church for more than a thousand years; who am I, that I should disturb the peace, separate myself from the communion of the church, for reasons, which such multitudes of excellent persons

maintain to be consonant, and which I cannot prove to be contrary, to the sense of scripture? Who am I, that I should fancy myself to have more of the mind of God, than the whole united church of true believers, eminent saints, and illustrious martyrs?

"But there is no precept for this worship in scripture," (page 1.) and Dr. Owen affirms, "that a divine command is the ground (he means, I presume, the only ground, or else the quotation is nothing to our author's purpose) of all worship." (Page 25)—Dr. Owen's character, I own, is considerable, as well as his assertion pre-emptory; but yet I cannot prevail on myself to submit to his ipse dixit as an oracle, nor reverence his judgment as infallible.—I would ask the Doctor, what divine command the Heathens ever received to worship the blessed God? I know of no verbal or written precept. But they saw their warrant included in their wants, they perceive their obligation resulting from the divine attributes.—Will Dr. Owen maintain, that no worship was expected from the Pagans? That they had been blameless, and acted according to the principles of their duty, if they had withheld all acts of veneration from the deity? No, Surely, St. Paul, in declaring them faulty, for not worshipping the Almighty in such a rational manner, as was suitable for his pure and exalted nature, clearly intimates, that it was their duty both to worship, and to worship aright. It is not said by the apostle, though it is the consequence of the Doctor's position, that they ought to have refrained from all worship, and not have meddled with matters of devotion, till they received an authentic warrant from revelation. The inspired casuist grounds his duty, in this particular, upon the eternal power and god-head (Rom. i. 20.) of the supreme being, which were discoverable by the exercise of their understandings, and from a survey of the creation.—In conformity to the apostle's sentiments, I should rather place the foundation of religious worship in the glories, the mercies, the unsearchable riches of the Almighty Majesty. These, together with the reasonings which dependent creatures bear to this all producing, sustaining, infinitely beneficent God, are the grounds of worship.

to authorize addresses of adoration. These are reasons prior to all express revelations, and would have subsisted, if actual commands had never been given. If this be not true, what will become of all natural religion?—Scripture, indeed, has declared explicitly the binding nature of these motives; scripture, like a sacred herald, has promulged what God fore-ordained, what reason had decreed, what necessarily flowed from the habitudes of persons and things. Or, to represent the point in another light, the perfections of the godhead are the original, the inviolable obligation to all expressions of homage and devotion; to ratify this obligation, and impart to it all possible solemnity and sanction, scripture has added the broad seal of heaven.—If this be right reason, and if the holy ghost be really God, his all-sufficient excellencies, and my state of dependence, are a proper licence, or rather a virtual mandamus, for the applications of prayer, and the ascriptions of praise. Grant this one proposition, relating to the divinity of the blessed spirit, and admit that his eternal power and godhead are a sufficient ground for religious worship, and we shall find ourselves unavoidably determined. We must rebel against our reason, must violate the dictates of our conscience, must act in opposition, not to one particular text, but to the main tenour and scope of the whole scripture, if we do not render all the service, yield all the reverence, due to a glorious being, in whom we live, move, and exist.

But still we are told, in various places, again and again we are told, “that there is no express warrant.”—Prodigious stress is laid upon this word express, the whole force of the objection seems to terminate on this point. There is no express warrant, therefore, it is an unwarrantable practice.—For my part, I have not discernment enough to perceive the conclusiveness of this arguing: I must beg leave to deny the consequence of such a syllogism. For if the sense of various scriptures has made it a duty, this is warrant enough, though it be not particularly enjoined, or tolerated in form. This maxim our ingenious author will admit in other cases, and why not in the present? There is no express command to add any prayer at the celebration

of baptism. When our Lord instituted the ordinance, he only delivers the form of initiation into the christian church, without any prescription relating to concomitant prayer. When *Philip* administered this sacrament to the Eunuch, there is no mention of any address to the Almighty, pertinent to the occasion. I cannot recollect, that any of the holy writers either inform the world, that they practised such a method themselves, or so much as intimate, that they would advise others, in succeeding ages, to accompany this solemnity with suitable devotions.—But though we have no positive injunction, we have the reasonableness of the thing, for our plea. Other scriptures, that virtually, though not explicitly, recommend it, are our warrant. In every thing, says *St. Paul*, let your requests be made known unto God : consequently, in this sacred and important thing.

I must again declare, that I can by no means assent to our author's grand *postulatum*, that nothing in the way of divine worship is allowable, but what has an express warrant from scripture. Because virtual warrants, are warrants; consequential warrants, are warrants. Our objector must maintain this in some instances, and why should he disclaim it in others. To be consistent in conduct, is surely essential to the character, of an impartial enquirer after truth.—Shall such an one sometimes reject an argument as weak and insignificant, because it happens to be illative only, and not direct; and at other times urge it as cogent and irrefragable? I will mention one very memorable particular of this nature; that is the case of the Lord's day. Why does Mr. *Tomkins* transfer the sanctification of a particular day from the seventh to the first? Has he any express command in scripture, any express warrant from scripture, for this alteration? If he has, let him produce it. I must own, I have none but consequential warrants; warrants formed upon conclusions, and derived from some remarkable scriptures. But these not near so numerous, not near so ponderous, as those which concur to establish the divinity of the holy ghost. Now if an express warrant be not needful in the one, why should it be so rigorously insisted on in the

other duty?—If then this leading principal of our author's be false or precarious, what truth, what certainty can there be in any, in all his deductions from it? If the ground-work be unsubstantial, and the foundation fall, what solidity can there be in the superstructure? How can the building stand?

Possibly Mr. Tomkins may reply, "The example of the primitive church determines this point."—We find, it was the custom of the earliest antiquity, to observe the christian sabbath on the first day of the week; and therefore have very good reason to believe, that the usage was established by apostolical authority.—And may not I say the same, with regard to the custom of ascribing glory, and rendering adoration, to the third person of the trinity? Justin Martyr, the most antient and authentic apologist for christianity, who is next in succession, and next in credit to the *patres apostolici*, he declares expressly, that it was the received custom of the christian church, in his days, to worship the Holy Ghost. Can expressions be imagined more forcible in their signification, or more apposite to our purpose? They import the highest acts of adoration, and yet they describe the regards which were paid by the purest antiquity to the Holy Ghost. These particular instances are as necessarily implied in those general terms, as the species is included in the genus.

You will please to observe, that this amounts to a great deal more than Mr. Tomkins, (page 17) not very ingenuously suggests, viz. "That there is so little appearance of the observance of such a custom, for so many ages of the christian church."—Few hints and little appearance! Can a clear and determinate declaration, made by a writer of the most unquestionable veracity, concerning the unanimous, the universal practice of the antient church—can this evidence, with any fairness and equity, be rated at the diminutive degree of hints and little appearance.

As to what is remarked relating to the corruption of the early writers, the interpolations, or alterations made by careless transcribers, (page 17.) this seems to be a most empty and jejune insinuation. It is what will serve any side of

any debate. It is opposing hypothesis to fact; precarious and unsupported hypothesis, to clear and undeniable fact. This sure is catching, not at a twig, but a shadow.—I never could like Dr. Bentley's *O citantia & Hallucinantia Librarium*, even in his animadversions on Heathen authors; because it was an outcry fitted for any occasion, a charge ever ready at hand, and equally suited to discountenance truth, or detect error. Much less can I think it sufficient to overthrow the testimony, or invalidate the authenticity of our ancient christian writers.—Would a bare innuendo (and Mr. Tomkins's is no more,) and that from an interested person, without the least shew of proof; would this be admitted, in a court of judicature, to supersede the plain, the solemn disposition of a credible witness? supersede it? Quite the reverse. It would convince the judge, and teach the jury, that the cause must be extremely wrong, utterly unsupportable, since artifices so weak and transparently fallacious were used in its defence.

But, it is frequently objected, that no mention is made, no warrant is to be found for distinct worship. The afore-cited writer, and the whole scripture is silent upon the article of distinct worship. And the reader is led to suppose that there is some mighty difference between distinct, and I know not what other kind of worship. Why does our author harp so incessantly upon this string? Whence such irreconcilable aversion to this quality of worship? One would almost suspect, he was conscious, that some worship should be paid, but could digest the doctrine, nor submit to the payment of distinct worship.—I must rely once for all, that if any worship be due, distinct worship cannot be improper; much more if all worship (which I apprehend, is included in Justin's words, and follows from the divinity of the blessed spirit) be requisite, distinct worship cannot be unwarrantable.

Another grand argument, urged by our enquirer, is, "that the apostles, as far as appears, never practised this worship of the holy ghost themselves, nor recommended it to others," (page 2.)—He should, by all means, have printed as far as appears in *Italics*, or *capitals*. Because then

the reader would have apprehended more easily the uncertain foundation on which the reasoning is built.—But though this particular, relating to the practice of the apostles, does not appear, one way or the other, yet our author in his 4th page, and else where, concludes from it as assuredly as if it stood up in authentic record. “For, says he, if we admit, that the reason of things is sufficient to establish this practice, it will prove too much;” it will, undoubtedly, if it proves any thing, prove it a duty to pay such worship to the holy spirit; and, consequently, that the apostles were deceiver, either in not seeing this reason of things as well as we, or not practising according to it. Does he not here suppose, the apostle in omission an acknowledged, undoubted point? which, a few lines before, he had confessed to be dubious and unapparent.

If we yet dur to insist upon this little self-contradicting slip, I would ask, what reason has Mr. *Topham* to conclude, that the apostles omitted this usage, which the christian churches have adopted? Do they ever declare, or so much as hint, that they are determined to omit it? Do they ever caution their converts against it, as a dangerous error? Is there any such memorial preserved, or any such caveat lodged, in their sacred writings?—Now, to argue in our author's strain: if it was so unjustifiable a thing to address praise, or put up prayer to the holy ghost, there could not be a more necessary precaution, than that the apostles, those careful instructors, should have warned their people of the mistake, especially, since it was so extremely probable, to almost unavoidable, that they would fall into it. For I appeal to the whole world, whether a considerate person would not naturally judge it reasonable, whether a devout person would not feel a forcible inclination, to worship that venerable man, into which he was baptized; and to praise that beneficent being, who is the author of so many inestimable blessings. Yet though this is so apparently natural, such as the apostles could not but foresee was likely to happen, they say not a syllable, by way of prevention; they

take no care to guard their converts against such a practice. A pregnant sign, that it is allowed by divine wisdom, and chargeable neither with superstition, nor idolatry.

But our author, to corroborate his argument, adds, "to suppose the apostles directed any explicit worship to the holy ghost, though we have no mention of it in scripture, where yet we meet with frequent doxologies of theirs, and addresses by way of prayer or petition" would be an unreasonable presumption.—I cannot accede to this assertion. The doxologies and prayers of the apostles, recorded in scripture, are only occasional and incidental; inserted as the fervour of a devout spirit suggested, in the body of their doctrinal and exhortatory writings. Now the omission of such a practice in writings, which were composed with a view of instructing mankind in the great fundamentals of christianity, which were never intended as a full and complete system of devotions.—The omission of this practice in such writings, can be no fair or conclusive argument for its being omitted in their stated acts of public worship. If, indeed, the apostles had, in their epistolary correspondence, drawn up a form of devotion; had declared that in them was comprised a perfect pattern of devotional addresses, proper to be offered to the deity? that all acts of worship, which deviated a jot or tittle from that prescribed form, were unlawful;—if such a composition had been transmitted from the apostles, and we had formed no such addresses therefrom, as those for which we are pleading, I should think that would deal of force in the argument drawn from the epistolary collection. Though, at the same time I could not but be sensible to forbear wondering at the inconsistency of such pretensions, with respect to that the holy ghost is God, and of their worship, which refuses him divine honors.—But, I think, on the other hand, no solid argument, nothing but a weak conceit can be formed from this circumstance of its being unpractised in the writings of the apostles.

"It does not appear that the apostles addressed distinct worship to the blessed spirit; therefore we conclude, that they never so addressed none." As though fact and appear-

ance were convertible terms.—I am surprized, than an author of Mr. Tomkins's penetration can prevail upon himself to be satisfied, or should offer to impose upon his readers, with a deduction so very illogical. Is the not appearing of a thing, a certain argument, or indeed any argument at all, for its not existing? It does not appear, that there are mountains, or groves, or rivers beneath our horizon. It does not appear, that there are any such vessels as lymphatics, or any such fluid as the chyle, in these living bodies of ours. But by comparing them with others that have been dissected, and by reasoning from indisputable principles, relating to the animal economy, we assure ourselves of the reality of both these particulars.—Consider, Sir, into what unnumbered absurdities, and evident fashions, this way of arguing would betray us, if pursued in all its consequences. It will prove, if we once admit it as a test of truth, that nothing was transacted by scriptural men, but what is particularly recorded in scriptural history. I no where read Isaac circumcised his son Jacob, or instructed his household after the example of his father Abraham. But shall we infer, from the silence of scripture, with regard to these matters, that he never conformed to the former institution, nor performed the latter service? I should much rather believe that, as he bears the character of a godly man, he walked in both these statute and ordinances of the Lord his makers. And, since the apostles uniformly agree in this grand promise, that the holy ghost is God, it seems more reasonable to conclude from hence, that they paid him direct worship, than from their bare silence to infer, that they neglected this practice.—I no where read in the sacred writings, that St. Peter suffered martyrdom, or sealed the testimony of Christ with his blood. But must we, on this account, persuade ourselves, that he was not one of the noble army of martyrs? No, you will say; it is very supposable, that he laid down his life for his Saviour, even though this event is not expressly recorded, because our Lord clearly predicts it, when he informs him, by what death he should glorify God. And may not I reply, with purity of reason, it is very supposable, that the apostles, in their solemn promises,

addressed direct distinct worship to the holy ghost, became their declaring their belief in his personality and divinity, was a strong intimation that they should, was a sort of prediction that they would, render all kinds of homage and adoration to him.—Upon the whole, if this be a mere presumption, no better than a *gratus dictum*, that the apostles did not worship the holy ghost, then all the species arguments, derived from hence, drop of course.

Our objector still insists, "that this is not a necessary part of christian worship" (page 2) — he pleased to observe, how he departs from his first or fourth. His first enquiry, that which the title page exhibits, was, whether this be warrantable; then, with an evasive dexterity, he slips into another topic, and maintains, that it cannot be necessary. Whether this be tergiversation or inaccuracy, I shall not stay to examine; but must ask Mr. Tomkins, what reason he has for this positive determination, that it cannot be necessary?—Because, on the contrary supposition, "we shall condemn the apostles, as guilty of a great omission," (page 2d.)—This argument the author uses more than once, therefore, I may be excused in replying to it once again.—

We can have no pretence to condemn the apostles, till we have undeniable proof that there was such an omission in their conduct. Who can assert, who dares maintain, that, when the apostles were met together in the holy congregation, for large, solemn, copious devotion, they never recognized the divinity of the three sacred persons, never addressed distinct acts of praise or invocation to each respectively? This Mr. Tomkins may persist in supposing; but after all he can suggest, in vindication of this principle, it will amount to no more than a bare supposal. I may, at least, as fairly suppose the very reverse: and, I think, have the suffrage of reason, the analogy of scripture, the consent of the purest antiquity on my side.—However, in case Mr. Tomkins had demonstrated, by incontestible evidence, that the practice under consideration cannot be necessary. Does he confine himself, in every instance, to what is strictly necessary? Does he not allow himself in what is expedient? Could he not mention various particulars, which are not at

solutely necessary, but yet they are decent and useful; they contribute to the beauty and harmony of worship, to the comfort and edification of the worshippers? Perhaps, it may not be necessary to particularize in our devotions the present distress of our nation, and to form particular petitions suitable to our natural exigencies, or particular thanksgivings accommodated to our national deliverances. But since this is very expedient; since it tends to beget in all a more lively sense of our dependence on divine providence; since it is a most emphatical method of ascribing to the supreme disposer the glory of all our public mercies; this practice is very becoming, very proper, very useful. Should I plead in opposition to this custom, that it is not absolutely necessary. Your prayers may be acceptable to God, and beneficial to your country, without such particularizing. St. Paul gives no express command, sets no explicit example of any such usage. There is no precedent from any of the Apostles, where the affairs of the state, under which they lived, are particularly displayed before God in humble supplication.—Would Mr. Tomkins think this a sufficient reason for him in his private, or for ministers in their public devotions, to discontinue the practice? No, verily; the propriety, the expediency of the thing, would justify and ascertain its use, even though no scriptural pattern had recommended, no scriptural precept enjoined it.

It is affirmed, (page 5,) "that the addresses of the new testament are always made to the father, or to the son;" and it is added, (page 10) "that there is neither rule nor example in it for worshipping any other persons whatever."—This point our author affirms with a very positive air, as though it were incapable of being contriverted. And therefore, often builds assertions on it, often makes deductions from it. Suppose it was an undeniable truth, I think, we have shown, that it can be no satisfactory proof, that in all the enlarged devotions of the apostles, no addresses were offered to the blessed spirit, because a few short ejaculations made no explicit mention of him.—But this assertion, perhaps, upon a closer examination, may appear too bold and unjustifiable; somewhat like the position which has

been advanced with regard to the sentiments of the primitive writers, and practice of the primitive church. It might be proper to consider, on this occasion, 2 Thess. iii. 5. The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and patience of Christ. This you will allow to be a prayer of benediction. You will also observe, that here is particular mention of three persons. The Lord, who is the object of the invocation, and bestower of the blessing, is neither the father, nor the son. And who then can it be, but the holy ghost? whose amiable office it is, to shed abroad the love of God in our hearts *—It will not, I presume, be intimated, that this is the only passage of the kind. For, were it the only one, yet where the evidence is infallible, we need not the mouth of two or three witnesses to establish the matter in debate. However, for further satisfaction, we may consult 1 Thess. iii. 11, 12, 13. 2 Thess. ii. 16. If we consider these texts in conjunction with those scriptures which speak of the holy ghost as a distinct person, we shall perceive a beautiful propriety, and a particular emphasis, in understanding the verses as mentioning the sacred persons severally. The latter text especially, considered in this view, is extremely pertinent, has a very admirable propriety and agreeably to a maxim laid down by a great master of correct writing:

Reddere Personæ scit convenientia cuique.

Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, and our father, who hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work. Supposing the three persons implied in this supplication, every thing that is attributed to each, has a perfect conformity with that part, which each is represented as acting, in the blessed work of redemption, e. g. Our father, who hath loved us; for God so loved the world, saith St. John, that he gave his only-begotten son, God, the holy ghost, who hath given

* Rom. v. 5.

us everlasting consolation ; for it is the peculiar office of the blessed spirit to administer comfort, called therefore the paraclete. Jesus Christ, who hath given us good hope through grace ; we have hope in Christ, saith the apostle to the *Corinthians*, and nothing is more frequently celebrated, by the apostolical writers, than the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. — Behold then a pertinency, a beauty, a significant distinction, and an exact harmony between all the parts of this verse, if taken in our sense ; but a strange, confused, tau-
tological kind of diction, if you disallow, that the three di-
vine persons are distinctly applied to.

Page 6. It is suggested, " that we may incur the resentment of the other two persons, as shewing a neglect or disrespect to them, if, of our own heads, we should in any peculiar and distinguishing form, worship the father." — This, sure, is a most unworthy insinuation, as though the infinitely sublime and glorious persons of the godhead were meanly ambitious, or weakly jealous. This is measuring the deity, not by our reason, which is a very incompetent standard ; not by our senses, which are still more inadequate judges ; but even by our sordid and vile affections. — But not to insist upon this gross error ; not to aggravate this affront offered to the adorable trinity ; this intimation, and others of the like strain, seem to be founded on a great mistake, with relation to the nature of the godhead. The essence is one, though the persons are distinct. So that whatever honor is paid to any person is paid to the one undivided essence. If we call Jesus the Lord, St. *Paul* assures us, it is to the glory of God the father. Whoever sees the son, our Saviour himself declares, sees the father also, (*i. e.*) whoever has a right understanding of the son, and sees by faith his divine excellencies ; that man sees, is acquainted with, the perfections of the father also. And for this obvious reason, because the father and son are one. And will not this hold good with regard to the Holy Spirit ? — If so, whatever honor is paid to one, is paid to all the three sacred persons : or rather whatever devout ascriptions of praise are addressed to either of the divine persons, they are addressed to the one living incomprehensible God. — I wish Mr. Tomkins

had attended to this consideration. It might have guarded him against some other unwary expressions, which imply the notion of polytheism; particularly that in page 10. where he tells us, "what the scripture sets forth the father and the son as the objects of worship." I cannot find any such representation in scripture. The scripture is uniform and consistent, and speaking of but one God, speaks of but one object of divine worship; viz. the infinite deity, distinguished by a threefold personality. This may seem strange; but since we have the Saviour's word, and the apostle's evidence, to support the tenet, it should, methinks, be admitted as true. This may seem strange, but is it therefore to be rejected as false? At this rate, we must deny the existence of a thousand phenomena in nature; we must explode as impossibilities numberless apparent facts.

Page 7. The inquirer advances a very unaccountable proposition. "It should seem, says he, that the son of God had quitted for that time (during his humiliation) his claim to divine worship; and though it should be granted that he did receive divine worship before."—I must ask with the Jewish ruler, how can these things be? Can God abandon his divinity? Can he cease to be supremely great and good? Is he not, I would not say by the necessity, but by the absolute perfection of his nature, to-day, and yesterday, and for ever the same? If so, it seems impossible, that creatures should, for so much as a single instant, be released from the duty of adoration; it seems impossible, with reverence be it spoken, that God should relinquish his claim to their profoundest homage. This would be to deny himself; 2 *Tim.* ii. 18.—This tenet, I imagine, is contrary, not only to reason, but to scripture. I should be glad to know, whether Mr. Tomkins, when he was composing this paragraph, recollected that memorable saying of our Lord, *John* vi. 15. No man hath ascended into heaven, but he who came down from heaven, even the son of man who is in heaven. Is not this a manifest proof, that our Saviour was in heaven by his divine nature, even while his human nature was sojourning on earth, or confined within the limits of a scanty apartment? And if the di-

vine son while holding, in his humanity, a conference with Nicodemus, was present by his godhead in the heavenly regions, could the angels be insensible of his presence? And if sensible of his presence, could they withhold their adoration? *Credat Judæus apella non ego*.—Let Socinians, and men that are called infidels, believe such an absurdity. I cannot reconcile it to my apprehensions.—Our Lord manifested himself, it is true; because, when he appeared among mortals, he appeared without the pomp and splendor of his celestial majesty. He suffered no such glory to irradiate and adorn his person, as surrounded him on the mount of transfiguration, and will invest him when he comes to judge the world: but was, in all things, such as we are, sin only excepted. Thus he humbled himself, not by deposing his eternal godhead of its essential divinity, but by withholding the manifestations of it, in that interior nature, which he was pleased to assume.

Page 8. Our author seems to mistake the meaning of the royal edict, issued out in the heavenly world, let all the angels of God worship him*. He supposes this was a command to worship the son in the sublime capacity of God over all. This, surely, could not be the sense of the words. Because, a command of such an import, must be needless. This was the natural, the unchangeable, the imperishable duty of all creatures: and such as those superior intelligencies could not easily discern, such as those inferior spirits could not but readily obey, without any particular injunction. The command, therefore, I apprehend, is rather referable to the humanity of our blessed Redeemer; to that nature in Immanuel, which purged away our sins, by becoming a propitiatory sacrifice. This was made known to the angels.† This had an illustrious name given it, to which every knee should bow. This was exalted into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject to the man Christ Jesus. If this remark be true, then our author's

* Heb. i. 6.

interpretation is erroneous ; consequently, his round-about argument, derived from a mistaken principle must fall to nothing.

Page 12. In the note our objector asks, " Did the people of Israel, upon hearing these words : I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, ever imagine, that there were three persons then speaking ?"—This question, I suppose, is intended to invalidate the doctrine of the trinity. But the great article stands upon a rock, too impenetrable to be undermined by such an interrogatory, too immoveable to be shaken by such a suggestion. I pretend not to give a categorical answer to the query, but only desire to observe, that the people of Israel have several intimations, in their sacred books, of a plurality of persons, in the unity of the divine essence.

They were accustomed to hear *Moses* speak in the plural number, when he relates the wonderful work of creation, let us make men. Their inspired and royal preachers spoke of the almighty maker of them, and of all things, in plural terms, remember now thy Creator *, in the original Creators. The prophets acknowledged and teach this grand mystery, particularly the Evangelical prophet Isaiah, chap. xlii. 9, 10. So that, if the children of Jacob and Joseph were ignorant of this awful truth, it seems owing rather to the blindness of their understandings, than to the want of proper discoveries from above.—But be the case, as it is supposed, with regard to the Jews. Are we obliged to copy their ignorance ? Must their sentiments be our guide ? Their imaginations the model of our creed ? Surely, for a Christian to argue, or even to surmise, that there is no such thing, because the ancient Jews were not acquainted with it, is altogether as unreasonable, as it would be unphilosophical to maintain, that there are no such places as America, or Greenland, because they were both unknown to the ancient inhabitants of Canaan.—Mr. Tomkins cannot but know, that it is the excellency of the Evangelical dispensa-

tion, to take off the veil from the Mosaical. That we, by comparing their law with our gospel, by applying the interpretation of our apostles to the doctrines of their prophets, are able to see clearly, what they perceived but dimly. Ye do always resist the holy ghost, says St. Stephen, as your fathers did, so do ye *. If this reproof be compared with the several narratives, recorded in the old testament, concerning the stiff necked and refractory behaviour of the Jews, we shall gather by the clearest deduction, that the holy ghost is Jehovah. Perhaps, the Israelites, when they heard the Psalmist playing upon the harp and singing this congratulatory hymn of praise, thou art ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even for thy enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them † — The Israelites, I say, upon hearing these words, might not be aware, that the person who ascended up on high, was the blessed Jesus; and that the Lord God dwelling among, dwelling in depraved disobedient mortals, to renew and reclaim them, was the holy ghost. But we, by collating Ephes. iv. 8. with the former part of the verse; and John xiv. 17. Rom. viii. 11. with the latter, are, to our exceeding great consolation, brought to the knowledge of these glorious doctrines.

Page 14. Our author observes, "that Dr. Watts would prove the propriety of paying divine worship to the holy ghost, from the form of administering baptism."—This argument he undertakes to invalidate. He proceeds in a very unexpected manner; springs a mine, of which we were not at all apprehensive. What if it should turn to the overthrow of his own tenet?—The doctor maintains, "that baptism is a piece of worship." Our author replies, "that hearing the word, in the public assemblies, may also be reputed a piece of worship."—May it so? Then, *Ex Ore tuo*—Your own concession confutes your opinion. For, if to hear the word with assiduity, with reverence, with an humble expectation of its becoming the instrument

* Acts vii. 51.

† Psalm lxxviii. 12.

of our salvation.—If this be a species of worship, it is, doubtless, a worship paid to him, who is the author and giver of the word. Now, we are sure, that it was the holy ghost, who spake by the prophets, who spake by the apostles, who spake all the words of that life, which, in our religious congregations, are explained and enforced.

Page 15. Mr. *Toulmin* urges the expression of St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 2. which I cannot forbear suspecting, notwithstanding all the remonstrances of charity, which thinketh no evil, he wilfully misunderstands. It is evident, on the very first glance, that Moses, in that place, cannot mean the man Moses; but the system of religion, the body of laws, moral, judicial, and ceremonial, which were, by him, delivered to the Jews. Is it therefore a proof, that to be baptized into the name of the holy ghost is no act of worship to that divine person, because it was no act of worship to Moses, to have been baptized into an Economy instituted by God, and only promulged by Moses.

For my part, I am stedfastly persuaded, that to be baptized into the name of the holy ghost, is a very noble and sublime kind of worship; not to say, an indispensable obligation to all other instances and degrees of worship.—It is coupled with that greatest of christian duties, believing.—Which I take to be a worship of the mind, far more important than any Bodily homage; without which, all external expressions of adoration are mere formality. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.—I verily think, no one will deny, that baptism is, at least, equal in its import, to circumcision; instead of which it seems to be substituted. Now circumcision was evidently a token and ratification of the covenant of Jehovah. It was a visible attestation to the person circumcised, that the Lord was his God, engaged by covenant to protect, bless, and make him finally happy. It was a solemn declaration of an absolute self-surrender to the blessed God, to acknowledge him for the only Lord, to serve him in all dutiful obedience, to seek his glory, and to be resigned to his will. This seems to have been the meaning of that divinely appointed rite, emphatically expressed in those words of the Jewish legislator, that

hast this day avouched the Lord to be thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and to hearken unto his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people *.—And can we imagine, that baptism, which has superseded circumcision, is inferior to it in significance? Or can we imagine, that these solemn acts of recognizing the Lord for our only God, and consecrating ourselves to his honor, are no expressions of worship.

Though this dedication of ourselves to the service of the holy ghost should be implied in the ordinance of baptism, "still it must be granted, replies our author, that this can be no other service of the spirit, than what is enjoined in the new testament," (page 15.)—Thereby insinuating, that it is somewhat different from the service, we stand engaged to yield both to the father, and to the son. But according to all the allowed methods of speech, the baptized person is dedicated alike to each of the three sacred persons: he avows them all to be the object of his worship, and the author of his salvation. There is no manner of difference in the terms which specify the obligations; and since divine wisdom has made them the same, why should we presume to pronounce them diverse?—How unaccountably strange would the baptismal form be, on our objector's interpretation; I baptize thee into an obligation to adore, to obey, to worship the father and the son; but not to pay the same reverential and devout regards to the holy ghost.

What writer of ingenuity, in order to support a single hypothesis, would do such apparent violence to the meaning of the sacred text? What reader of discernment would become a convert to an opinion, which must darken and pervert the most evident sense of scripture, in order to acquire an air of plausibility?—Suppose a person should, in making his last will, express himself in the following style: I constitute A, B, and C, my joint executors; I give and bequeath to them, whatever remains of my estate, and goods when my legacies are paid, and my debts cleared. Would

* Deut. xxi. 17, 18.

it not be a most extravagant and unreasonable pretence, if a captitious neighbour should maintain, that C it not vested with an equal power, has not a right to an equal dividend, with A and B? If a gentleman of the long robe should offer to give this for law, would he not forfeit his character either of sagacity or integrity?—If none of these observations will convince Mr. Tomkins, that he has misrepresented the tenor and extent of the baptismal engagement, we will, in order to bring the matter, if possible, to an amicable accommodation, accede even to his own assertion. He argues, “That no service of the spirit can be meant, but such as is enjoined in the New Testament.”—Agreed; let us join issue on this footing. Let us rest the cause on this bottom. As it is Mr. Tomkins’s own motion, I hope, he will acquiesce in the result of such a trial. Now, the New Testament, both virtually and explicitly, requires us to acknowledge the Holy Ghost, to be God and Lord; and what service is payable, according to the prescriptions of the New Testament, to such a being? This, and no other, I would render myself: this, and no other is rendered by all the churches. I do not so much as attempt to be an advocate for any other worship, to be addressed to the divine spirit, shun what the evangelical scriptures direct us to offer unto that majestic and venerable, that tremendous and amiable nature, the Lord our God. If therefore the New Testament demands all honor and adoration, as the inviolable due of this most exalted being, then Mr. Tomkins must either flatly deny the divinity of the Holy Ghost, must contradict the express declaration of the inspired writers on this head, or else confess, that his notions stand condemned even on his own principles.

What is alledged from 1 Cor. i. 13. This seems to corroborate our sentiments, rather than to support his. St. Paul asks, with warmth, and a sort of holy indignation—he speaks of it as an absurd and shocking thing. Now, what could render this so odious and inoustrous a practice, such as the Apostle disclaims and rejects with abhorrence? Nothing, that I can apprehend, but the horrid evil it would imply. The evil of describing divine honors to Paul, mak-

ing Paul an object of worship, and consecrating persons to a creature, who ought to be consecrated only to the Creator, God blessed for ever. So that I must declare, I think this text a strong intimation, that baptism is really a sacred service, which it is utterly unlawful for any creature to assume or admit. Therefore the good Apostle renounces it, with a noble kind of detestation; much like the angel, who when John offered to fall at his feet, and do him homage, cries †.

The apostolical benediction is another passage usually and deservedly produced, in justification of our practice. Mr. Tomkins alledges, "That this is very different from a direct address by way of prayer to the spirit," (page 17.)—It seems to me to be an undoubted prayer, and to have the very same force as if it had been expressed in the more common recatory form; O Lord Jesus Christ, vouchsafe them thy grace; O God of goodness, grant them thy love; O eternal spirit, accompany them with thy comfortable presence. That this is the purport of the words, is undeniable; and where is the extraordinary difference, whether they be introduced by an *esto* or *fac*?—I believe all will allow the form ordained by God (Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26.) for the use of the Jewish Priests, was a real prayer. The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!

If this was an address to the Almighty, the apostolical benediction is exactly of the same nature. To say, that it was only a kind wish, and not designed for a devout aspiration to Jehovah, must greatly debase and enervate it. Not to hint, that this sacerdotal blessing contained a recognition of three divine persons, which might be obscure in that age, but has been fully illustrated by the apostles. Not to hint the great probability, that St. Paul had this very passage in his eye, when he breathed out his benedictive prayer, and purposely intended to explain it in the Evangelical

sions.—Besides, I would desire to know whether any minister could, with a safe conscience, use the following benediction? The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Virgin Mary, be with you all, Amen! why should a conscientious minister be afraid of using such a form, if it be no prayer? If it be not a virtual ascription of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence to the virgin, and, in consequence of those attributes, a supplicatory address to her?—Still we are encountered with another objection, “if I should say to a friend, may the good angels attend you; shall this be called a praying to the angels?”—Mr. Tomkins himself must own, if he will deal fairly, that the case is by no means parallel. The elect angels disavow all divine worship, but does the holy ghost do this? The elect angels are ministering spirits, but of the holy ghost it is said, the Lord is that spirit. The angels are essentially created and finite beings, so that it would be absurdity and blasphemy to invoke them; but the holy ghost is possessed of the perfections, performs the works, and is called by the incommunicable name of God, so that it is wisdom and piety to pray to him. For which reasons, I make no doubt, but that, whenever the apostles put up such an ejaculation, they accompanied it with a devout mental address to the uncreated spirit. Because, it would be a piece of irreverence and of folly, barely to wish the mercy, and not apply to that ever-present being for its accomplishment.

As for the other arguments which Dr. Watts advances, in order to vindicate the custom of ascribing praise to the holy ghost, viz. “that it may be expedient to practise it frequently in some churches, where it has been long used, lest great offence should be given.”—“That it may be proper to use it some times, on purpose to hold forth the doctrine of the trinity in times of error, and to take away all suspicion of heresy from the public worship.”—These considerations I leave to the Doctor. I have no inclination to try my skill at such weapons, but chuse to act with regard to them, as David acted in relation to Saul’s armour; because, I really think, that they rather encumber than uphold

the cause. They are so unwarily worded, that they represent the practice, not as a noble essential piece of divine worship, founded on the strongest and most invariable principles, always suitable to our necessities, and always correspondent to the nature of the blessed spirit; but as an occasional and time-serving expedient; to be used not constantly, but now and then only; and that, to answer a turn, none of the most important, to avoid not any real deficiency in worship, but only a suspicion in heresy. Whenever I am solicitous to secure the conclusion, I would by no means offer to deduce it from such unsolid and precarious premises.

I have now examined the most considerable objections, urged by Mr. Fomkins, against the unanimous practice of christian congregations, whether they conform or dissent. I shall only beg the continuance of your candour and patience, while I touch upon another particular or two, which may farther corroborate our custom, and prove it to be somewhat more than warrantable.

Suppose we produce a command of our Lord Jesus Christ; will this be sufficient to ascertain the practice? Does our Saviour give this charge to his Apostles? Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers, into his harvest*. Now I would humbly ask, who the Lord of this spiritual harvest is? Shall we refer ourselves to scripture for satisfaction? Will Mr. Fomkins abide by the determination of scripture? Will he honestly acknowledge, that if the scripture declares the Holy Ghost to be the Lord of the Harvest, we have then a clear commission, a positive command, to address ourselves by way of prayer to the Holy Ghost?—It is the Holy Ghost who appoints the labourers, that are to be employed in this harvest. The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them†. It is the Holy Ghost, who qualifies the workmen, that are to dispatch this mo-

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* Matthew ix. 38, Luke x. 2.

† Acts xiii. 2, and xx. 9.

mentous business, with wisdom, with knowledge, with utterance, and with all miraculous abilities, 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10, 11. It is the Holy Ghost who makes these labours effectual, and crowns them with ample success, *Acts* x. 44. 1 *Thess.* i. 5.—From these scriptures, and their testimonies concerning the blessed spirit, it seems indisputably plain, that he is the Lord of the harvest. Can we have a more forcible motive to pray unto him, than the consideration of his superintending, conducting, and prospering the progress of (that best of blessings) the everlasting gospel? Need we a better warrant to offer our devoutest applications to him, than our Lord's express injunction, viewed in connection with these remarkable texts.

Suppose, I prove farther, that the heavenly beings pay divine worship to the Holy Ghost. In the sixth chapter of Isaiah, we meet with one of the grandest representations imaginable. Jehovah exhibits himself to the entranced Prophet, seated on a lofty and august throne; before him stood the immortal hosts of seraphim; they veiled their faces in token of deepest self-abasement; they lifted up their voices with a rapturous fervour, and uttered this magnificent acclamation, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. If you look forward to verse 8, you will find another circumstance confirming this remark, for the glorious majesty speaks of himself, in the plural number, who will go for us. The proof I chiefly depend on, is found in *Acts* xx. iii. 25. where St. Paul evidently applies the words, spoke by this majestic and divine being, to the Holy Ghost, well spake the Holy Ghost saying. And if he attributes the words to this sacred person, who dares separate the honors? Since all must allow, that the person who gives the commission to the prophet; and the person whom the celestial legions adore, is one and the same.—Since therefore the angels address the Holy Ghost with solemn acts of praise; since they bear united testimony, that the whole earth is full of his glory: Mr. *Fontenay* should consider, whether he acts a becoming part, in endeavouring to exclude his glory from any christian congregation by his example, and from every christian congregation by his writings.

If Mr. Tomkins should still think his own opinion sufficient to over rule all these allegations of scripture, of greater weight than the practice of St Paul to the Thessalonians, more unexceptionable, and fitter to be admitted as our pattern, than the example of the Angelic Host; I cannot but imagine, that the propriety of our custom is apparent even on the tenor of his own favourite notions. Page 10. He quotes that grand and fundamental law of revealed religion, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." He proceeds to consider, who this Lord our God is, whom we are to serve. He then informs us, "it appears from the whole current of scripture, in the new testament, as well as the old, that it is he, who, in times past, spake unto the fathers by the prophets." Rightly judged. We make no appeal from this verdict, but acquiesce in it, though it is his own. Only taking along with us St. Peter's declaration, prophecy came not in old time (rather, at any time, *unquam*, not *olim*,) by the will of man, but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the holy ghost*. Mr. Tomkins himself maintains, that the genuine and undoubted object of divine worship, is that infinitely wise and gracious being, who spake to our fathers by the prophets; and St Peter, in the most express manner possible, asserts, that this infinitely wise and gracious being, who spake by the prophets, is the holy ghost. Can demonstration itself be plainer? Sure then, Mr. Tomkins must either retract his position, or disallow the apostle's application of it, or else give us leave to adhere inviolably to our practice, to look upon it as justifiable beyond all reasonable exception, and, what should carry some peculiar weight with our author, justifiable on principles of his own.

May I urge this point a little farther?—I should be glad to know, what is the scriptural meaning of being converted unto the Lord. Is it not, to renounce every lying vanity, to forsake every evil way, and turn to the Lord with all our heart? That we may fear him, love him, put our wis-
 * 2 Pet. i. 21.

trust in him, and serve him truly all the days of our life. Does not this include some, rather is it not comprehensive of all worship? So that, if it is certain from scripture, that sinners are to be converted to the holy ghost; then it is equally certain, that sinners are to pay not some only, but all worship, to that blessed being, who is the center of their souls, and the source of their happiness. Be pleased to read attentively 2 Cor. iii. 16, 17. and we dare venture to stand by your decision.

Let me add one more consideration, and I have done.—The blessed spirit is to help our infirmities in prayer, Rom. viii. 26. The spirit is to subdue our iniquities, and mortify the deeds of the body, Rom. viii. 13. The spirit is to shed abroad the love of God in our hearts, Rom. v. 5. The spirit is to sanctify us wholly, in all our faculties, 1 Thess. v. 23. The spirit is to transform us into the divine image, 2 Cor. iii. 18. The spirit is to seal us unto the day of redemption, Eph. iv. 30. and to be the earnest of an incorruptible inheritance, Eph. i. 14. In a word, from the spirit we are humbly to expect all the fruits of goodness, righteousness, and truth, Eph. v. 9.—Now what a comfortable prospect rises before us, if this spirit be the all-sufficient, the infinite God, to whom nothing is impossible; who is able to do for us exceedingly abundantly even above all that we can ask or think! but how languid must be our hopes, how scanty our expectations, if he be not the divine being, but only some finite existence! and, in another state of things, to whom will righteous souls acknowledge themselves inexpressibly indebted, to whom will they return their ardent thanks, and address the most joyful praises, but to the author of all these inestimable blessings? If this then is likely to be the employ, and the delight of heaven, should it not be begun on earth?

Upon the whole; since the custom of offering prayer, and addressing praise, to the holy ghost, is contrary to no text of scripture, is founded upon his divine nature, and results from the indispensable obligation of creatures to worship the godhead;—Since it was undeniably the practice of the christian church, in its purest days, and has been receiv-

ed, by unanimous approbation, for many hundreds of preceding years :—Since it is probable, if we will allow their doctrines and conduct to be consistent, it is certain, if we will prefer the most accurate and unembarrassed interpretation of their epistles, that the apostles used this method of worship :—Since the analogy of the whole scripture justifies it, and the innumerable benefits, which are communicated to us from the blessed spirit, demand it :—Since angels ascribe glory to his awful majesty, and our Saviour directs us to put up prayers to his almighty goodness.—These, and other considerations, determine me to join, without the least scruple, with full assurance of its propriety, in that ancient noble doxology.—Glory be to the father, who hath loved us with an everlasting love,—and to the son, who hath washed us from our sin, in his own blood,—and to the holy ghost, who applies these blessings of redeeming grace to our corrupt hearts ; to this great, eternal incomprehensible trinity, be rendered undivided honors, and immortal praise !

Having been so very prolix already, I shall not render myself more tedious by making any apology, but shall only add, what no consideration can induce me to omit.

Yours, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXI

Weston-Fawell, March, 1745-6.

Dear Sir,

YOU have set me a task, which I should be glad to execute, if I was able. God forbid, that I should be backward to plead for the interests of that redeemer on earth, who, I trust, is making perpetual intercession for me in heaven. - But my fear is, lest the noble cause should suffer, by the unskillfulness of its defendant. It is for this reason, purely for this reason, I wish to decline accepting the challenge, you seem to give me in your letter. For this once, however, I will enter the lists, and venture to try the strength, not of your arm, but of your arguments.

I do not wonder, that you have objections to make against christianity, I know some eminent christians who were formerly warm and zealous in the opposition: yet they have frankly owned that their minds were then either very inconsiderate, or else immersed in other speculations; and that they had no leisure, or no inclination to weigh the evidences, and examine the nature of the Evangelical doctrine. Since they have applied themselves to consider these points, with a seriousness and attention, becoming an enquiry of the last importance, an enquiry, in which their very souls and all their eternal interests were embarked, they are thoroughly convinced that their former sentiments were wrong. They are fully persuaded, that the gospel-institution is of divine extract; that it is a system; noble and sublime, benevolent and gracious, every way suitable to the majesty of God, and admirably calculated for the comfort, the improvement, and the happiness of mankind.

Methinks you will reply, and very reasonably, "that all such should be able to account for the change of their opinions,"—I dare say they can.—But as you call on me

so particularly to vindicate the religious principles, which I have from my infancy embraced; I will now attempt to vindicate them from the various charges, of which they stand arraigned in your letter.

Be pleased then, dear Sir, to observe, that the christian doctrine teaches, that when God brought man into being, he blessed him with a state perfectly holy and happy. If you read the Bible, the authentic narrative of our fall, as well as the only guide to our recovery, you will find it an avowed truth, that God made man upright. If, therefore, man corrupted himself, and (as it is impossible to bring a clean thing out of an unclean) polluted his offspring; where is the harshness, where the injustice of the divine procedure in adjudging him worthy of death? Let God be justified, and let mortals bear the blame.

You think it very odd, that this tragical catastrophe should be occasioned by eating an apple—So should I too, was there nothing more in the case, than barely eating an apple. But this was a wilful and presumptuous breach of a most positive command, of the only command, which the Almighty lawgiver enjoined. And the smaller the matter of the prohibition, the more inexcusable was the fault of not complying with it. In this act of disobedience was implied, the most perverse discontent in the happiest circumstances imaginable; the most shameful ingratitude for the most inestimable favours. Pride and arrogance, even to an unsufferable degree; implicit blasphemy, making God a liar, and hearkening to the suggestions of the devil, in preference to the solemn declarations of truth itself. Indeed, this transgression was a complication of iniquities; and, though represented under the extenuating terms of eating an apple, was really the most horrid provocation, that was ever committed.

But that the transgression of Adam should fasten guilt, or ~~transmit~~ corruption to his latest posterity, this, you imagine, is all a chimera.—If then you was created in a perfect state; if you suffered nothing by the original lapse, why is your heart prone to numberless evils? Why do you tread in the steps of an apostate ancestor? Why do you violate the law

of an infinitely pure God, and too often delight in that abominable and accursed thing which he hateth, sin? You are too honest and ingenuous to deny the truth of these expositions. And if so, you must allow, that your nature was depraved in *Adam*, or, which seems to be more culpable, that you have corrupted yourself. Then, there is no such great cause to find fault with the supreme disposer of things, for including you in *Adam's* trespass, since you yourself do the same things.

Is it consistent you ask with the character of an infinitely good being, to make this resolve, that he would, on account of this single crime, bring into existence almost innumerable millions of creatures, so spoiled [by himself, that they should all deserve eternal damnation?—I answer, this is entirely a misrepresentation of the christian scheme. It was not in consequence of the original crime, that God determined to bring the human race into being; but, in pursuance of his own eternal purposes, which are always the issue of consummate wisdom, of unbounded benevolence, and will, unless his creatures stubbornly reject the overtures of his love, terminate in their unspeakable felicity.—Neither was the human race spoiled by the Creator, but by themselves.—To suppose, that the author of all excellence should deprave the work of his own hands, is doubtless a shocking thought, and such as we utterly disavow. So far was he from being the sole operator, that he was not so much as accessory in any degree to their misery: but warned them of their danger; charged them to beware; and planted the barrier of his own tremendous threatenings between them and ruin.

You are displeased, that everlasting happiness should never be attainable by any of these creatures, but by those few to whom God gives his effectual free grace.—If the proposition be set in another light, which is really the true method of stating it; if we say, that, though all have sinned, yet all may recover everlasting happiness, because effectual grace is freely offered to all: what can a man of candour object to such a dispensation? Will he not acknowledge the goodness of the divine procedure, and inveigh against

the perverseness of mortals, the most unreasonable perverseness of all those, who are so proud to be sensible of their want of grace, or too careless to trouble their heads about it? Will he not be constrained to declare them suicides, and that they are chargeable, if they perish, with their own destruction? If we prescribe a medicine of sovereign efficacy, and the sick is so self-willed as to refuse the remedy, who is to be blamed, in case of a miscarriage, the physician, or the patient?

When therefore you talk of persons being unavoidably damned, you quite misconceive the tenor of our most merciful and benign institution; which offers forgiveness to all, though ever so profligate, through the Saviour's atonement; which makes a tender of grace to all, though ever so abandoned, through the Saviour's mediation. The language, the most compassionate language of which, is, turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die? And because the sinner, enslaved to vice, is unable to shake off the fetters, it farther says, ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find, grace sufficient for you.

As to the meaning of the term grace, I apprehend, it signifies the pardon of obnoxious, and the acceptance of unworthy persons, on account of the expiation and merits of their Redeemer. It imports also a communication of knowledge and strength to ignorant and impotent creatures, that they may discern their Creator's will, and discerning, may be enabled to perform it. And in forming these ideas, I can see nothing strange or expecting blessings, nothing foolish.

But still, perhaps, you think it scarce reconcileable with the wisdom, the justice, the mercy of God, to suffer mankind to fall. That he foresaw it, and could have prevented it, is undeniable. He foresaw it, or else he could not be omniscient: he was able to have prevented it, otherwise he could not be omnipotent.—But what if the eternal maker knew, that this would give rise to the most ample and glorious manifestation of those divine attributes, which you suspect to be exposed hereby? Will this not conciliate your

approbation? Would this incline you to acquiesce in the economy of the gospel?

Certainly it is a most stupendous discovery of wisdom to find out a method, whereby the seemingly jarring attributes of justice and mercy may be reconciled.—Whereby the sinner may be saved, without any injury to the inviolable holiness of his laws, or any derogation to the honor of his just and righteous government. It was impossible to give such an amazing proof of his infinite kindness for poor mortals, as by delivering his own son to take their interior nature, and bear all their guilt. Nor can there be so signal an exertion of justice, as to punish this most excellent person, when he stood in the place of offenders; or of mercy, as to divert the vengeance from their obnoxious to his immaculate and innocent head.

As from the scheme of redemption, the highest glory redounds to the divine majesty, so the richest consolation is derived from hence to frail creatures. The happiness of men consists in the favour of God. His love is better than life. To be graciously regarded by that adorable being, who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; to be the objects of his complacency, whose smile constitutes heaven, and whose frown is worse than destruction;—this, this is human felicity. And how could God Almighty give us a brighter evidence, a more pregnant proof of his inconceivably tender concern for us, than by rendering his only son to condemnation and death for our sake? Transporting thought!—with a delight, which man could never be known, till Adam fallen. This obviates an objection, on which you strongly insist, that you and others never consented to make Adam your representative. For if this method of ordering things be productive of a superior felicity, to all that are willing to be happy, then it can be no wrong to the world in general, or to any individual person in particular. No more than it is a wrong to the minor, for his guardian to procure interest for his money, and improve his estate, till the time of his coming to age.

Upon the whole, there is no reason to quarrel with that sovereign will of God, which permitted us to fall in Adam,

from thence to contract guilt, to derive pollution, and, consequently, to deserve damnation. But rather there is abundant cause to admire, to adore, to bless his holy name, for providing a Redeemer; a Redeemer of unknown dignity, and unutterable perfections; a Redeemer, by whom all the evils of the fall may be more than redressed; a Redeemer, in whom all the awful and amiable attributes of the deity are most illustiously displayed; a Redeemer, through whom the most wicked, and most unfortunate of our race, may find mercy, and arrive at happiness; a Redeemer, who most compassionately invites all, all that are weary and heavy laden, to come to him, and most assuredly declares that whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.—And is it not strange,—very strange,—hardly credible, sure, that any should reject so great a salvation, and chuse death rather than life?

Let me beg of you, Sir, to consider these points with calmness and impartiality. You cannot but be sensible, that many learned, many wise, many excellent persons, most cordially believe them; receive their chief satisfactions from them; and would rather die than renounce them.—Since it is possible, at least, that they may be in the right; since you do not pretend to be infallible in your judgment; and since you acknowledge a God of unerring wisdom, and everlasting goodness, let me beseech you to implore his guidance in your search, and his direction in your determination. For I am not ashamed to own, or rather I am bold to maintain, that this wisdom cometh from above; this wisdom is the gift of God; and prayer is altogether necessary to its attainment, as sagacity of mind, or the accomplishments of learning.

Yours, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXV.

Dummer, June 27, 1737.

Dear Brother,

I Find you are at London looking out for a trade, and a master to set yourself to. I hope, you pray earnestly to God to guide you in your choice by his infinite wisdom. He only knows what kind of employ will be best for you ; in what family or neighbourhood you will have the most helps and encouragements to holiness ; where you will be most exposed to temptations, to evil company, and to an early corruption. Therefore, remember, what you have learned in the third chapter of Proverbs and now above all other times, put in practice, " In all thy ways acknowledge HIM, and he shall direct thy paths." Beseech the all-wise God to go before you in this weighty undertaking, and to lead you to such a master, and to settle you in such a place, where you may, the most advantageously, work but your salvation. Desire also your honored mother, and mine, to have a great regard to your soul, and the things that make for its welfare, in putting you out. Let it be enquired, not only whether such a tradesman be a man of religion and godliness. Whether he be a lover of good people ? a careful frequenter of the church ? whether his children be well nurtured and educated in the fear of the Lord ? Whether family prayer be daily offered up in his house ? whether he believes that the souls of his servants are committed to his trust, and that he will be answerable for the neglect of them at the judgment-seat ? It will be sadly hazardous to venture yourself under the roof of any person, who is not furnished with these principles, or is a stranger to these practices. But if he be quite contrary to all these, a despiser of God and goodness, wholly devoted to carnal pleasure, and worldly gain ; if he not only omit the religious care and oversight of his household, but also set them a wicked and corrupt example ; let nothing induce you to

enter into his service. A lewd, drinking, sweating, master, will be sure to disregard the sobriety and purity of your behaviour, and very likely to corrupt it. To have his disorderly carriage daily before your eyes, will be as dangerous as to lodge in a plague-house.—After you are bound to a master, you must be as diligent in doing your duty to him, as you should be of examining into his character before you are bound. As I have given you my advice concerning the latter of these particulars, I fancy you will not take it amiss, if I give you some directions concerning the former. As soon as you are bound, you are at your master's, and not at your own disposal: he has then a right to your hands, your strength, and all that you can do. He becomes a sort of parent to you; and though not a natural, yet a civil, father. You are also obliged, not only by the laws of your country, and the tenour of your indentures, but by the fifth commandment of God, to pay him all due submission and honor. To do this, is a most material part of your duty, as a christian, as well as your undeniable debt, as an apprentice. It is required of you by God, in holy scripture, and you must not once imagine that you do what is pleasing to him, unless you conscientiously perform it. Now, that you may know what it is that your master will expect from you, and what it is that the Lord has enjoined you, with regard to him, remember, it consists, first, in reverence of his person; secondly, in obedience to his commands; and, thirdly, in faithfulness in his business.

First, in reverence of his person. You must esteem him very highly for his superiority's sake, and the resemblance he bears to God. For God, who made you, and has an uncontrollable power over you, has communicated some of that power to your master; so that you are to look upon him as the representative, in some sort, of the divine majesty, and invested with some of his authority. Accordingly St. Paul says, 1 Tim. vi. 1. You must count him worthy of all honor; all *i. e.* internal and external, that of the actions and words, as well as that of the heart. It is not enough to maintain a worthy estimation inwardly, but you must let it appear on all occasions outwardly, by behaving yourself very obligingly to him before his face, and by speaking

very respectfully of him behind his back. Suppose you should discern failings and infirmities in him, you must by no means divulge them, or make yourself merry with them, much less must you dare to set light by any of his orders. Whatever you have reason to think will grieve or displease him, will be prejudicial or offensive to him, that you must cautiously forbear.

Secondly, obedience to his commands. See how full the apostle speaks to this purpose, "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh," Col. iii. 22. Observe likewise, from this passage, not only the necessity, but also the compass, and latitude of your obedience; how large and extensive it is. It reaches, not barely to a few, but to all and every instance. If you should receive orders that are ever so much against the grain of your own inclination, you must force yourself to comply with them; receive them as you used to do nauseous physic, though they be unpleasant at first, they will do you good, and be comfortable to you afterwards; your own pleasure must always stoop, and give way to your master's. If he sets you a task as is mean and ignoble, and such as (according to the expression of the world) is beneath a gentleman's son, do not scruple it dear brother, but dispatch it cheerfully. Remember who hath said, servants obey your masters in all things. And, oh! remember that be we as well born and bred as we will, yet he that was higher than the highest of us all, even the most excellent and illustrious person that ever lived, condescended to the lowest and (such as our fine folks would account the) shamefulest offices. The Lord Jesus Christ, though the brightness of his father's glory, disdained not to wash his disciples feet. Neither be dejected because you are treated in an unworthy manner, or set to do some mean and low office for him, or his family, but rejoice rather in that you are made like unto your Redeemer, and in the happy prospect you will have of becoming great in heaven, by being so little on earth. I am aware this piece of advice is not so unexceptionable as the rest, it may possibly be adjudged the mark of too yielding and sneaking a spirit; but never forget that the things which are most highly esteemed by God, are held in least

repute by men. I know, and am sure, that if any apprenticeship would make such a compliance for the sake of preserving peace, and out of conscience to the command of God, and with an eye to the example of Christ, there is a day coming when he will not repent of it; when it will not be deemed a blot in his character, but be an ornament of grace to his head, and more comely than chains about his neck *. Well, you see your obedience must be universal; you must come when he calls you, and go where he bids you, do all that he commands you, and let alone all that he forbids you. This must moreover be done, not grudgingly, or of necessity, but readily and gladly: for hear what the scripture saith, whatsoever ye do, do it heartily †; and again, with good will doing service ‡; so that we must not creep, but be quick and expeditious in our business, howsoever disagreeable. * You must not go about it with grumbling words and muttering in your mouth, but with so satisfied an air, as may shew that you are pleased with whatever pleases your master.

Thirdly, In faithfulness in his business. This is the last branch of your duty to your master; and since Moses has obtained an honorable testimony, on this account, be you also faithful in all his house §. You may find this, as indeed all the qualifications of a good servant, described by St. Paul, (Tit. ii. 10.) Not purloining, says he, but shewing all fidelity. You are charged not to purloin, i. e. not to keep back from your master, nor to put into your own pocket, nor convert to your own use, any of that money, which in the way of trade and commerce, passes through your hands. You were taught from childhood, to keep your hands from picking and stealing, and I hope you abhor such abominable practices from the bottom of your heart. You must not sell at a cheaper, and buy at a dearer rate, in order to have some valuable consideration made you privily in your own person. These differ from robbing on the highway, (they are flagrant acts of dishonesty, and will cry

* Prov. i. 9.

† Colos. iii. 23.

‡ Eph. vi. 7.

§ Heb. iii. 1.

to heaven for vengeance) only in being less open and notorious. Such tricks and villainous devices do the same thing by graft and treachery, as housebreakers do by force and violence. Therefore, dear brother, renounce, detest, and fly from them as much as from fire, arrows and death. Besides, you are not only to abstain from such clandestine knavery, but also to shew all good fidelity. What is meant by this, you may understand, by reading how Joseph conducted himself in Potipher's service. Your master it is likely will commit the management of some of his affairs to you, and you must endeavour, by a discreet behaviour, and a pious life, to bring the blessing of the Lord upon all that you take in hand. You must lay out your time, and your labour, and give all diligence to answer the trust reposed in you. You must not delay the business which is urgent, nor do your work by halves, nor transfer that to others which is expected you should do yourself. The slothful man, says Solomon, is brother to him that is a great waster; therefore you must avoid idleness, and carelessness. In a word, you must do nothing knowingly and wilfully that is likely to impoverish your master, but seek by all lawful and laudable means to increase his substance. All this you must observe, not only when he stands by you, and inspects you, but when his back is turned, and you are removed from his view; otherwise your service is nothing but eye service, such as will prove odious to man, and is already condemned by God.—But I am afraid I tire you; this one sentence, therefore, and I have done. You must carry yourself, throughout the whole course of your apprenticeship so respectfully, so obediently, so faithfully, that at the end of it you may truly say with Jacob, with all my power I have served your father. May God bless you all, and your affectionate brother, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Dear Sister,

I Have taken my pen in hand to write; but what shall be the subject? News I have none; or, if I had my brother would communicate it, in his conversation.— Let me imitate a royal example. It was once said by a renowned king, my song shall be of mercy and judgment: of the same let my letter treat. The former was very lately the topic of some agreeable discourse with a young gentleman.— We observed, how necessary it is, to be firmly persuaded of the infinitely rich mercies of God in Christ Jesus. This will make us dight to think of him, and encourage us to fly to him, Whereat, if we have a jealousy, that he bears us ill will, or designs our ruin, we cannot take pleasure in him, or place our confidence in him. Therefore the condescending God has given us repeated and solemn assurances of his pity, his grace, his tender mercy in Christ Jesus.

*Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7 **. He makes it his very name. Intimating, that a man may forget his own name, before the blessed God can cease to be merciful to them that fear him.

Ezek. xxxiii. 7, 11†. He confirms his divine good will to us by an oath. He swears by his very life, that he de-

En

* And the Lord said I will be true to him, and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and yet, and steadfast by means of the penalty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and to the fourth generation.

¶ To thee, O Son of man, I have for thee watchmen unto the house of Israel, and unto them that have the word at my mouth, and warn them before me. Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that he wicked turn from his way, and live; turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

sires our happiness, and seeks our salvation.—Here are two immutable things, the name, and the oath of God.—Can we have stronger confirmation of his loving kindness

I think, if it be possible, we have. He has so loved us, saith the scripture.—How hath he loved us? So, as no words, no not of his own all-wise spirit can express; nothing but the unspeakably precious effects. So as to surrender his own son, to die that we might live; to be made subject to the law, that we by his obedience might be made righteous; to become a curse, that we might inherit the blessing.—Read what the wife of Manoah very justly alleges, and apply it to the point before us, Judges xiii 23 *. for I can no more: I hear my friend Mr. —'s coach coming to carry me out on a visit.

Yours, &c.

JAMES HERVELY.

LETTER XXVII.

TO HIS FATHER.

Biddesford, October 1, 1742.

Reverend & Honored Sir,

YOUR last, containing the melancholy account of the death of both my aunts, I received. I hope they died in the Lord, and sleep in the bosom of Jesus; and then, truly, they are the happy persons, and we the objects of pity. They rest, and have cast anchor in the harbour; whereas we are still beating on the ocean, and tossed in the

with all men. If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have us a burden-bearing, and a meat-eating at our heads, neither would he have showed us his love. nor would, at the same, have told us such things as these.

storm.—If we consider things impartially, this world is ~~one~~ grave; nor do we really live, till we burst the fleshly prison, and get beyond the visible skies.

In the grave is darkness. It is called the shadow of death.—And what else is this wretched world? What, but a state of gloominess; a valley of the thickest darkness? where poor mortals grope in spiritual ignorance; and wander up and down, not seeing the things that belong to their peace.

In the grave, among the tombs, we look for phantoms and apparitions.—And what else do we meet with here below? A thousand sorts of happiness present themselves to our wishes, but are unsubstantial and phantastical all. They are a gay delusion, and mock our expectations, as one of those vanishing forms would baulk our embraces.

The grave is the land where all things are forgotten.—The ideas of friendship are obliterated, and the dearest relatives are remembered no more.—And is not this too true a description of our present state? Do we not unaccountably forget Jesus Christ, our almighty friend, and everlasting glory, our invaluable heritage? Where is the man that remembers his bleeding Saviour, on his bed; and thinks upon him when he is waking? No; the Redeemer's inconceivable love, and the precious benefits of his passion, are buried in a deep oblivion. This world then of darkness, apparitions, and forgetfulness, is the grand dormitory. Flesh and blood the tomb of our immortal minds.

Nascentes mortuor.

I fear, I tire you, honored Sir. But because I have no news, that you can apprehend or relish, I allow my pen in these excursions.—This week I was sent for to visit a lady of this parish, in the same disorder, which proved so fatal to my two aunts. She lay, poor gentlewoman, most terribly afflicted, and is now released. It put me in mind of the Psalmist's penitential acknowledgement, which I think is never more applicable than in the case of the small pox: "*When thou, Lord, with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a*

"*moth fretting a garment.*" I shall rejoice to hear that you and my mother continue well, under all your trouble and fatigue, and remain,

Reverend and Honored Sir,

Your most dutiful son,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXVIII.

Weston-Pavell, April 1, 1746.

Dear Sir,

IF you can spare the *Night Thoughts*, the bearer of this ticket will bring them safely to *Weston*. I propose to read them, when business is done, and the day is fled; so that the time may correspond with the subject.

I hope, the Bookseller has, before this time, waited on you with the little volume, which desires your acceptance. Was it to pass through my hands before it was presented, I should almost be induced to inscribe it with that pretty line in Virgil,

Munera parva quidem, at magnum testantur amorem.

Pray, do you think that passage, *Luke vi. 38.* is rightly rendered by our translators? Shall men give into your bosom. Is the idea of men necessarily implied in the original? Or can fact and experience justify the translators in giving this sense to the original? God, and conscience, and a future state will amply recompense the beneficent; but whether men, the generality of men in this world are thus generous and grateful, seems to be a point that wants confirmation. This remark was suggested in perusing the place, but I submit it to your judgment, and remain,

Dear Sir, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

Weston-Fapell, November 1, 1746,

Dear Sir,

THIS morning I received your favour. The day fairs, and threatens rain, which debars me from the pleasure of paying you my thanks in person.

Mr. Huygens I hope to read very carefully. But, I believe, it will be proper to take heed of adopting into my plan any notions, that are difficult and abstruse. I would have every thing so perspicuous, that the dimest understanding may apprehend my meaning; so obvious, that he who runs, may read.—Let me lay before you a little sketch of my design, with a request, that you would alter the general order, and make retrenchments, or additions of particular incidents, as you shall think most expedient.

A contemplative walk.—The approach of evening and gradual extinction of light.—The advantages of solitude.—The stillness of the universe.—The coolness of the atmosphere.—Darkness, and its usefulness to mankind.—Sleep, and its beneficial effects.—Dreams, and their extravagance.—A glow-worm glimmering.—An owl shrieking.—A nightingale singing.—The very different circumstances of mankind; some revelling and carousing; some agonizing and dying.—A knell sounding.—The notion of ghosts walking.—The moon, with its various appearances, and serviceableness to our globe—the heavenly bodies—their number—size—courses—distances—display many of the glorious attributes of their Creator—some of which are specified—they teach nothing of redemption—this the peculiar prerogative of revelation—Christ the day-star from on high, that points out, and makes clear the way of salvation.

These are some of the subjects which, I imagined, might be admitted into the composition of a night-piece. If others occur to your mind more pleasing, or more striking, be pleased to suggest them.

I am glad to find by the quotation from Mr. Locke, that your esteem and veneration for the scriptures, are on the increasing hand. May we be persuaded, ever more and more, of the incomparable excellency of those sacred volumes. This one consideration, that they are the book of God, is a higher recommendation of them, than could be displayed in ten thousand panegyric orations. For my part, I purpose to addict myself with more incessant assiduity to this delightful and divine study. Away, my Homer; I have no more need of being entertained by you, since Job and the prophets furnish me with images much more magnificent, and lessons infinitely more important. Away, my Horace; nor shall I suffer any loss by your absence, while the sweet singer of Israel tunes his lyre, and charms me with the finest flights of fancy, and in-spirits me with the noblest strains of devotion. And even my prime favourite, my Virgil, may withdraw; since in Isaiah I enjoy all his majesty of sentiment, all his correctness of judgment, all his beautiful propriety of diction, and——but I must have done. The messenger waits, he can stay no longer, than barely to allow me leisure to subscribe myself,

Dear Sir, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXX.

Weston-Facell, Nov. 22 1716.

Dear Doctor,

AS I cannot attend the Infirmary at Northampton this day, permit me to take this opportunity of acknowledging the favour of your last.

The sermon you was pleased to lend me, I admire Christ the great propitiation is, with me, a most favourite

subject; and, I think, the author has been so happy as to treat it in a clear, nervous, pathetic manner.—I am delighted with his reply, and rejoice to observe, that it has passed a second edition. I hope the antidote will operate, and spread as wide as the poison.—This writer has another recommendation. His conciseness, added to perspicuity, renders his arguments easy to be apprehended, and not difficult to be remembered.—I am so much charmed with his performance, that I beg leave to keep it a few days longer; and should take it as a favour, if, in the mean time, you would give the bookseller an order to send for one of the sermons for me,

I heartily applaud the zeal you shew for the spiritual welfare of the patients. The Infirmary would be an inestimable blessing, if, by the grace of God, it might be productive of a reformation in the persons, whom it admits and discharges. As distressed objects will in all probability, resort to it, from all parts of the county, a change wrought in their hearts, and a renewal begun in their lives, might be a happy means of diffusing religion far and near.—I hope the clergy concerned in the management of the infirmary will, with delight and assiduity, concur in the prosecution of so desirable an end. I can promise for one, so far as God shall give him ability.—I wish some proper scheme were contrived for the execution of this design, in which I might bear some little part, without giving umbrage to my brethren, or alarming their jealousy.—I have sometimes thought of offering to give the patients a kind of lecture or exhortation once a week, formed upon some or other of those scriptures, which are the standing memento's of their wards*. But, sometimes doubtful whether such a proposal would meet with acceptance, sometimes checked by the infirmities of my constitution, I have hitherto neglected to mention the affair. However, I now venture to submit it to your consideration. To this, or any other more advisable method, I should very readily contribute the best of my assistance.

* Texts of scripture in the Northampton, Winchester, and several other Infirmeries, are written on the walls, and consequently, are very useful, if seriously collected on.

"Are you inclined dear Sir, to give the poor creatures all the instruction in the christian religion, you are capable of?"—We take you at your word; and henceforward look upon you as an associate in our great work. In a warfare of such unspeakable importance, we are glad to strengthen our force by the accession of every ally. Much more of such an auxiliary, as will be regarded by the patients with an uncommon degree of attention and pleasure. Nor can I think it any ways inconsistent with the office of a physician; or any derogation from the dignity of his character, to feel the pulse of the soul, to examine into the symptoms of spiritual maladies, to ask exploring questions concerning the habit of the mind, and prescribe according, either for the purging off the peccant humours of vice, or corroborating the relaxed powers of grace.

May that infinitely condescending and compassionate being, who disdained not in his own sacred person, to take our sicknesses, and bear our infirmities, both direct your counsels, and prosper your endeavours, in this momentous affair.

I purpose to wait upon you some afternoon in the next week, and cannot think of a more agreeable topic of conversation, than that of concerting measures for the proper exertion of this labour of love, and encouraging each other to abound in the work of the Lord.

I am, dear Sir, &c. &c.

JAMES HERVEY

LETTER XXXI

*Weston-Farell, November 29, 1746.**Dear Doctor,*

HAVING taken cold, and got a hoarseness, I am afraid to venture abroad: lest I should lose my voice, and be incapable of performing the duty of the morrow.

If any method is agreed upon by the committee for endeavouring, in some more effectual a manner, to promote the spiritual recovery, and everlasting welfare of the Infirmary patients, I wish you would be so kind as to inform me of it, in a letter: that if any part of this generous undertaking should fall to my share, I may address myself to the prosecution of it, with all the ability which the divine goodness shall vouchsafe to communicate. Or, if there be no need of my concurrence; that I may accompany it with my best wishes, and, at least, further it with my prayers.

Wm am, &c.

JAMES HERVELY.

LETTER XXXII

*Weston-Farell, Feb. 27, 1747.**Dear Sir,*

I Have read the ingenious gentleman's letter attentively, though he says the strongest things that can be urged upon the point, I still adhere to my sentiments; and not because they are mine, but the scriptures, and supportable. I am persuaded by a variety of texts from the oracles

of truth. — I beg leave to wave the prosecution of the controversy. Controversy is what I naturally dislike, and what I have seldom found advantageous. I know his opinion, and he has given me an opportunity of declaring mine; and I would only add, that if in any thing we be otherwise minded (than is consistent with the gospel of grace) God (upon a diligent application to his word, and humble prayer for the teaching of his spirit) will reveal this unto us. *Phil.* iii. 15.

I have been reading *Mr. Baxter's Saints Everlasting Rest*, and admire the copiousness, the justness, and the devotion of his thoughts *. How happy the soul, that while reading them, can make them his own! may this be always the prevailing desire; and in due time, the heaven-vouchsafed portion of the worthy owner of the book, and of his

Most affectionate Friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXXIII.

Weston-Pagell, February, 1747.

Dear Sir,

I Have heard nothing from my printer, during all this interval. What can be the reason of his long silence, and great negligence, I cannot imagine. But this week it occurred to my mind, that if he delays the second edition at this rate, I may possibly be able to prepare the third letter to accompany it. Accordingly, I have postponed other bu-

* This very comfortable and instructable book, (which well deserves to be in the hands of every Christian), has lately been most judiciously abridged by the Reverend Mr. Fawcett; and it may now be had for three shillings, in a neat pocket volume: The quarto edition being very scarce, and twice the price.

ness, and applied wholly to this work. I have transcribed some part of the intended piece, and sent it for your perusal. Pray be so good as to examine it narrowly, and favor me with your remarks and improvements, on a separate paper. There are, I fear, besides more material faults, several mistakes in the copy, owing to my want of leisure to review it. I suppose, the remainder of my design, when completed, will consist of about the same number of pages.

If I live till Monday, I propose to visit my patient at the Infirmary; and, if company happens to be agreeable, will take the pleasure of spending an hour with a certain valuable and very much esteemed friend at Northampton. If you are not able to guess the person I mean, you shall soon be informed by, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXXIV.

Weston-Favell, April 12, 1747.

Dear Sir,

I Have folded down a corner of the leaf at the place where your perusal left off. There is a note or two subjoined to the preceding pages, which I wish you would please to examine. My humble service to Dr. * * * *. I desire he will write his remarks and corrections on a separate paper. What think you of the following lines for a motto?

Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe,
Which gives those venerable scenes full weight,
And deep impression on th' intender'd heart.

Night Thoughts

— Si quid novisti rectius illis
Candidus imperiti.

Your plan for forming a christian assembly and regulating our interviews, I greatly approve. It seems to me, to be complete. I see nothing that should be taken from it; nor can think of any thing to be added to it. I heartily wish to have it carried into execution, and hope it will be productive of considerable comfort and advantage to the members; and not to them only, but, by rendering them more useful in their respective stations, to many others.

A cold, and hoarseness on my voice, make me somewhat fearful of coming to * * * * this day.— I hope you have perused the remainder of the manuscript; and cannot but wish, you would give the whole a second reading. The unknown importance of what we print, inclines me to urge this request. Who can tell how long it may continue, and into what hands it may come? I almost tremble at such a thought, lest I should write unadvisedly with my pen; and injure, instead of serving the best of causes.

If you have put my little piece into the hands of my Aristarchus, Dr. * * * * I mean, desire him to be particularly attentive to the redundancies, and lop them off with a plentiful hand.

I shall soon create you a second task, by transmitting for your correction, twenty folio pages of remarks on the stars, and serious improvements.

Your's &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. *Vir bonus & prudens visus reprehendet inertes,
Culpabit duras, incomptis allinet atrum
Transversa Calamo signum, ambitiosa recidet
Ornamenta, parum claris Lucem dare coget,
Arguet ambigue dictum, mutando notabit. HOR.*

This I transcribe, not to inform you of the critic's office, but only to apprise you of what I wish, and what I humbly request,

LETTER XXXV.

Weston-Favell, June 27, 1747.

My Dear Friend,

COMING home this evening; I could not forbear musing on the various topics, which furnished matter for our discourse; and now I am all thoughtful and retired. I cannot forbear taking notice of some particulars relating to our conversation. To be silent in such a case, would, I am persuaded, be more displeasing to a gentleman of your discernment and generosity, than to use the utmost freedom of speech.

Was it you, dear Sir, or I, that when a certain passage in scripture happened to be mentioned, treated it, not indeed with a contemptuous disdain, but with two ludicrous airs? descanted on it, in a sportive and frolicsome manner, in order to create a little pleasantry. If I was the person that indulged this improper levity, I beseech you to rebuke me, and severely too. Though my design might be innocent, my conduct was apparently wrong. That infinitely precious and important book, should be always held in the highest veneration. Whatever the divine spirit vouchsafes, to dictate, should be thought and spoke of by mortals, with gratitude, dutifulness, and awe. It is the character of a religious man, that he trembles at God's word; and it is said of the great Jehovah, that he has magnified his name and his word, above all things.

Who was it, dear Sir, that lent to our valuable friend that vile book, *Le Sophia*, and yet wrote by *Crebillon*, with an enchanting spirit of elegance; which must render the mischievous palatable, and the bane even delicious. I wonder,

that your kind and benevolent heart could recommend arsenic for a regale. It puts me in mind of the empoisoned shirt presented to Hercules. I am sure you did not think on it, or else you would no more have transmitted such a pestilent treatise to the perusal of a friend, than you would transmit to him a packet of goods from a country depopulated by the plague. If that polluting French book still remains in your study, let me beg of you to make it perform quarantine in the flames.

The last particular relates to attendance on the public worship of God. Let us not neglect the assembling ourselves together. This was the advice of the best and greatest casuist in the world; not to say, the injunction of the maker of all things, and judge of all men.—Would we be assured of our love to God! this is one evidence of that most noble and happy temper, “Lord, I have loved the “habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honor “dwelleth.”—Would we glorify the Lord? Then let us appear in his courts, fall low on our knees before his footstool, and in this public manner avow him for our God, recognize him for our God, recognize him for our king, and acknowledge him to be our supreme good.—Would we follow the example of our devout and blessed master! let us remember how it is written, “Jesus went into the synagogue, as his custom was.” And, if we take due care to get our hearts prepared, by a little previous meditation, and earnest prayer, I dare answer for it, our attendance will not be in vain in the Lord. God will, according to his promise, meet us in his ordinances; make us joyful in his house of prayer; and we shall experience that, (it I remember aright) that brightest ornament of the court of judicature, judge Hales declared, that he never sat under the preaching even of the meanest sermon, but he found some word of edification, exhortation, or comfort.

Dear Sir, bestow a thought on these things. If the remonstrances are wrong, I willingly retract them. If right, you will not pronounce me impertinent. Love and friendship dictate what I write, and the only end I have in view is the holiness, the usefulness, the happiness, the final salvation of my much esteemed friend. It is for this, this only

I have now taken my pen in hand, and for this I shall often bend my knees before God, and thereby prove myself to be,

Dear Sir, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXXVI.

Weston-Favell, 1747.

Dear Sir,

MR. H——delivered your message. Upon a repeated perusal of your rules and orders, I find nothing to add, nor any thing to alter. I think it is a finely calculated scheme, and seems very likely to be productive of considerable good.

When the disciples were together, after their master's resurrection, they had the honor, the comfort, and advantage of his divine presence. And why may not we, when associated on such a plan, and conversing with such views, reasonably hope for the same blessing?

I shall return all your books by the first opportunity, only the first volume of the History of the Bible, I beg to keep a little longer. The bible, I intend, for the future, to make the principal object of my study.

Perhaps, Dr. Wall will be so obliging as to answer my letter. And if so, I think, it will be proper to defer writing to Mr. Rivington, and sending the draught, till I hear the Doctor's sentiments.—I beg of you to accept the cordial compliments, as you have always the best wishes, and frequently the earnest prayers of,

Dear Sir, your's, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

*Weston-Faxell, July 18, 1741**Dear Sir,*

I Desire you to accept of my thanks for the Variety of beautiful lines, which you sent me, to choose a motto from. They are all elegant, but not sufficiently expressive of the design of the piece. Therefore, I imagined the following quotation from *Dr. Young*, somewhat more suitable ;

Night is fair virtue's immemorial friend ;
The conscious moon, thro' every distant age,
Has held a lamp to wisdom.

You advised me to add a sort of note to the passage objected to by Mr. * * *, relating to the spark's being visible *. In pursuance of your direction, I subjoined the following.

" I beg leave to inform the young gentleman, whose
" name dignifies my dedication ; that this was a remark of
" his worthy father, when we rode together, and convers-
" ed in a dusky evening. I mention this circumstance,
" partly to secure the paragraph from contempt, partly to
" give him and the world an idea of that eminently serious
" taste, which distinguished my worthy friend. The less
" obvious the reflection, the more clearly it discovers a turn
" of mind remarkably spiritual, which would suffer nothing
" to escape without yielding some spiritual improvement.
" And the meaner the incident, the more admirable was
" that fertility of imagination, which could deduce the
" noblest truths from the most trivial occurrences !

Will not this be looked upon as a fly underhand artifice,
whereby the author extols himself ?

Does the famous Dutch philosopher, Nieuwentyt (I think is his name) treat of the heavenly bodies? If he does, be so good, in case he dwells in your study, to send him on a week's visit to me. Dr. Watts's *Treatise on Astronomy*, I should be glad to peruse.

The *Hymn to the Moon*, whoever is meant by *Scriblerus* *ad comus in cymus*, is very poetical. I durst not venture to add what is wanting to render it a complete address, lest it should become like the visionary image, whose head was of gold, his feet of iron and clay.

My transient remarks on Dr. Rymer's *Representation of* *the English, or last*. I must desire leave to postpone observation on the other books.

I am, dear Sir, &c. &

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Weston-Larell, Aug. 8, 1747.

Dear Sir,

AFTER my thanks for what passed in yesterday's interview, give me leave to add my acknowledgments for the perusal of your poem, entitled, *The Duty* *. It is a noble piece, quite poetical, truly evangelical, and admirably fitted to alarm and comfort the heart, to delight and improve the reader. I must desire to read it again.

I visit the poor condemn malefactor, found him an ignorant person; aimed chiefly at these two grand points, to

Do

convince him of the heinousness of his sin, and shew him the insufficiency of the Saviour, to obtain pardon even for the very vilest of offenders. To preach and teach Jesus Christ his our office, to make the doctrine effectual God's great prerogative. Nothing more occurs, but that,

I am &c.

JAMES HENRY.

LETTER XXXIX

Westm.-Hall, Nov. 22, 1717.

Dear Sir,

HAVING read Dr. Muddleton's introductory discourse, I hardly know what to think of his bold assertion, "*that all the miracles supposed to be wrought after the apostolic age, are absurd and fabulous.*" I must suspend my opinion concerning this point, till I find it either confirmed by the silence, or confuted by the argument, of the advocates for Ecclesiastical antiquity. In the mean, I approve of his design, which is to settle the proofs of our holy religion on the basis of the inspired writings, and to deduce its doctrines from the same sacred source. The scriptures, as our friend H—beautifully expresses himself, are "the word and way of God, from whence we may draw weapons of a divine temper, wherewith to engage all that oppose the truth, or hold the same in unrighteousness."

Does not this ingenious writer bear a little too hard upon the religious character, and exemplary behaviour, of the primitive fathers? I cannot but think, they had, at least in this respect, a very evident superiority over most of their successors.—How flowing, perspicuous, and elegant is the Doctor's style; and how stiff, obscure, and bombast the language of the Archdeacon? I dare say, you could not forbear smiling at his,—blazing out most furious hyper-

critics; reproaching (not virulently, but, tartly; ~~fastidiously~~ (not severely, but) superciliously; and penetrating the very vitals of the dead languages.

If your *Matho* is not left out of town, I wish you would be so good as to send for it, and favour me with a sight of it by the bearer. The reason of my requesting this, is, that Mr. *Rivington* informs me by my brother, if he has not the last piece by the middle of next week, his press must stand still. And methinks, I would gladly peruse that volume of *Minio*, which relates to my subject, before I suffer my last essay to depart. — When can you afford me your conversation for an hour or two, in order to examine Mr. ***'s remarks, and bestow the finishing touches on the piece? Shall I wait upon you on Monday morning early? — When this business is dispatched, your book, and my thanks, shall be returned together.

Your's Sr.

JAMES HERVELL.

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LETTER XL.

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Weston-Pa:rell, Oct. 31, 1747.

Dear Sir,

WITH thanks, I return Colonel *Gardner's* info. Dr. *Doddridge*, the worthy author has presented me with a copy, which, I hope, will serve to humble and amuse me, so long as I live.

Alacrity on the *Divine Attributes*, I will soon receive. In the mean time, shall I beg the favour of borrowing *Pliny's Natural History*?

You remember, who is to call upon you (*Devoalche*) on Monday morning. I must devote the greatest part of this day to prepare my translatory quota of *Dickson's Therapen-*

tica Sacra.—The thoughts of our little society brings to my mind a pleasing circumstance, which I observed, when we were at our last interview. My very valuable friend Dr. S—— told a story, in which he had occasion to refer to some profane and execrable language. Instead of defiling his lips with a repetition of the hellish jargon, he was so truly discreet, as only to mention it under the general title of *Horrid Oaths*. A delicacy this, which I thought highly becoming both the christian and the gentleman.—I have sometimes took the freedom, to observe, in the most respectful manner, upon some little inadvertencies in my worthy friend's conduct: but now it is with the highest pleasure that I congratulate him, upon a most amiable piece of religious decorum, introduced into his discourse.

Your sincere friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XLI.

Weston-Favell, 1747.

Dear Sir,

THE surprize which your letter gives me, is inexpressible, and the grief equal. I will hasten, as soon as possible, to my worthy and afflicted friend: O! that I could bring with me some healing balm for his wounded heart! it would be no small alleviation of my own sorrows, if I might be instrumental to make his less.

I will detain the messenger no longer, and I hope I shall not stay long before I set out myself. It is owing wholly to an accident, that I do not accompany the bearer, with a view, and a hope of administering some consolation to poor Dr. S * * *, under this sudden and irreparable loss of so ac-

compleished a wife, of so excellent a mother to his very amiable children.

Dear Sir, Sir,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XLII.

Northampton, December 5, 1747.

My Dear Friend,

YOU will wonder to see a name which you have but lately known, at the bottom of this paper. But how,—oh! how will you be surprized? how grieved? to read the occasion.—It is so afflicting, almost so insupportable to our valuable friend, that he is unable to give you the narrative; therefore has committed the office (*triste ministerium*) to my pen.—And must I tell you? can you bear to hear it?—Mrs. Stonhouse is dead, that amiable and excellent lady is dead.—She was safely delivered of a daughter, the very day on which the Doctor wrote to you last:—Little did he imagine, poor man! that the death of his much loved wife was then so near:—he was as well as could be expected or wished on Sunday mornning, and departed this life on Tuesday evening.

In the forenoon on Sunday, the Doctor went out to visit his patients; and in the evening on his return, he perceived, to his great surprize, that Mrs. S * * * had been seized with a fever, during his absence, attended with some alarming, and, as he apprehended, fatal symptoms:—his desired Dr. K—— of this town to see her, who gave some encouragement; but as this was not satisfactory to Dr. S——, he immediately dispatched a messenger to another physician at a considerable distance (one Dr. ——— of ———) who came with all the expedition that the rigour of the season

would permit ; for the snow was deeper than it had ever been known, perhaps, in the memory of man, and the weather most terrible indeed ; the cold piercingly severe, and the roads dreadfully dangerous.—The moment this sagacious practitioner beheld her, he confirmed Dr. S——'s first sentiments, that the case was irrecoverable ; and added, that the great change was at the very door, and would probably take place in less than twenty-four hours ; which came to pass accordingly.

Your own tender and sensible heart will naturally conclude Dr. S—— is so oppressed with sorrow, as not to be capable, at present, of answering his most valued correspondents :

Cura levis loquuntur ; Ingentes stupent :

But he intends, when time has somewhat alleviated his grief, and religion has more reconciled him to the awful dispensation, to make a particular reply to the whole of your epistolary favour. You will, I do not question, recommend our distressed friend to the father of mercies, as the God of all comfort. May we all lay this awakening stroke of providence to heart, and give all diligence to have our sins pardoned through redeeming blood, our souls renewed by sanctifying grace ; that whether we live we may live unto the Lord ; or whether we die, we may die unto the Lord ; so that living or dying we may be the Lord's.

The second edition of my *Meditations*, with the addition of another volume, is at last published. I have given directions to my Bookseller, to send you a copy ; and beg of you to accept it, as a small, but the most speaking and eloquent expression, I am able to form of that great, and growing esteem I have conceived for Dr. Swan, ever since our first interview at Weston. Be pleased, dear Sir, to read it with the utmost or rather with your own candour, and sometimes dart up a short petition for the author, that whatever is the fate of his book, himself may live over his writings, and be, what he describes.

Most affectionate Friend, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

*Weston-Facell, Dec. 12, 1747.**Dear Sir,*

THIS, I hope, will find you perfectly recovered from your indisposition, and thoroughly reconciled to God's holy will. Afflictions, when sanctified, are real blessings; they work humility, and wean from the world; they teach us to pour out, not our words only, but our very souls, before God in prayer, and create an ardent desire after that inheritance in heaven, which is incorruptible and immortal, and those mansions of peace, where sorrow and sighing flee away. May this be the effect of that awful stroke, which has need so deplorable a breach on my friend's domestic comfort!

Next week Abernethy on the divine attributes will return to your study; and I only wish, that he might bring with him a little more of the everlasting and glorious gospel. With my compliments to Mrs. * * *

I am, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XLIV.

*Weston-Facell, Jan. 12, 1748.**My Dear Friend,*

LOTH to make your servant stay, and loth to trespass too much upon the patience of our family, who wait for me, I write in the utmost hurry.—After so great an opinion as that of the judicious Dr. * * *, I hardly dare venture to deliver my sentiments. Yet I must confess myself strongly inclined to prefer your intended motto.

Is it a vulgarism? Rather the simplicity of the gospel; accommodated to the lowest capacity, suited to strike ordinary readers; who are the persons most likely to be impressed. Or, if it is a vulgarism, let this be for the illiterate, the poetry for the polite.

Is it Puritanical? Be not ashamed of the name. They (the Puritans) were the soundest preachers, and I believe the truest followers of Jesus Christ. If such an imputation is a bugbear, we shall not act like gallant soldiers of Christ. Is it not the most important truth in the whole book of God? The surest, easiest, most convincing means of overcoming the dread of death? If so,—I need not make the conclusion.

Will censure ensue? Dear Sir, dread it not. Be bold for once to despise ridicule. Or rather, it must needs fall upon you, to glory in this:—*Dilectus haurit in cornu.*

Pardon my freedom. Only just think on my reasons. Reject them, and welcome. I shall be glad to be over-ruled for the better.

Dear Sir, your's, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XXXI.

Weston-Farrell, February 4, 1748.

My Dear Friend,

I Sincerely thank you for taking the trouble of correcting my marks for Italics. —I am glad you did not erase Mrs. S——'s name. I assure you, Doctor, I shall always esteem it a real honor to be reckoned in the number of your friends; and shall look upon it, as one of the satisfactions accruing from my book, that it tells it, in so pertinent a manner, to the world, though with regard to your

truly amiable deceased lady, I fear, it will be an instance of the arrogance of my heart, and a reproach upon the impotence of my pen, or else I would say,

—*Si quid mea Scriptula presunt,
Nulu dies unquam memori illud exime* *Ætæ.*

Your's, &c.

JAMES HARVEY.

LETTER XLII.

Weston-Farwell, March, 1711.

Dear Sir,

I AM very much obliged for the present of your books; they could never be more wanted, or more welcome. If you have not so much as you wish, to relieve the necessities of the poor, contribute to my stock. I am cloistered up in my chamber, and unacquainted with the distresses of my brethren. Lend me therefore your eye to discover proper objects, and your hand to deal about my little fund for charity. Do not forbid me to send a guinea, in my next, for this purpose; do not deny me the pleasure of becoming, through your means, an instrument of some little comfort to my afflicted fellow creatures, and (what is a far more endearing consideration) to the friends, the brethren, the members of that who died for my sins. If you have any other friend, to whose taste it may be agreeable, and in whose hands useful, I will empower you to make the present — Herewith comes the *Descant on Creation* enlarged. I hope, you will be able to read it, and not a little to

Can you engage Dr. D— to run it over?
De gratia, Iustitiam hoc munus

I shall write it over again, so fear not to erase and blot.
I have not seen, where or how I can handsomely introduce
this fine quotation from Mr. Dyer's *Ruins of Rome*; but
I will consider it because you desire it.

Your's Sc.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XLVII.

April, 1743.

FY, fy upon you, dear Doctor,—I had been endeavouring all the day long to fix my admiration on that most exalted, that most amiable being, who, though possessed of excellencies which the very angels contemplate with rapture and adoration, yet humbled himself to death, the glory of the ages for my friend and me. When your praises, kind indeed, but alas I perniciously, I had, fetched my thoughts from their proper element, and proper object, to revel on a creature, and that the meanness of creatures, self. I could wish myself, on such occasions, "like the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ears, and refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, when he never so sweetly." Praise is most excellent music to the human ear: shall I rather say most delicious poison to the human ear. From strangers, or complimentary correspondents, we must expect a harsh unpolish'd strain, a jangling of this species. But loving friends, bosom friends, affectionate friends, it must not be so.—You and I, dear Sir, will teach one another's hearts

to rise in wonder, and glow with love, at the contemplation of that ever-blessed sovereign, who is the Father of the earth, higher than the orientals, is the Father of the world, and the shadow of death, that he may make us the children of God, and bring us to eternal life. Pardon my excursions on this subject. — I trust, that my father is enough to cut constant, and constant, and constant. It informs me, that my poor sister is reduced very low, so low, that my father cannot hear her speak. He grows to look upon her life to be in very great danger. May the father of compassions restore her health; that she may live to the honor of her dying master, and be a comfort to her afflicted parents! Glad I am, that my dear friend can rely on the writings of that shining and burning light, Mr. * * *. Our disesteem of such gospel doctrines, as be tearless, generally, arises from ignorance of ourselves. Therefore, I heartily join you with the Grecian sage, in saying, *Εὐχαριστοῦμεν*.

Most affectionate Friend, &c.

JAMES HENRY.

LETTER XLVIII.

Weston-Favell, May 26, 1713.

Dear Sir,

I have given directions to my Bookseller to present you with a new edition of my *Meditations*; which I desire you to accept, and to look upon as a small, but an intended expression of my most affectionate esteem. The pleasure of your company I cannot expect often to enjoy; and, therefore, dear Sir, by means of my little treatise

converse with you now and then, as it were by proxy ; with a view of familiarizing to our minds those sublime subjects, which will be the study and delight of a glorious eternity.

Another set I have sent for Mr. * * * ; which I beg of you to render acceptable, by presenting. That worthy minister stands entitled to my grateful acknowledgments, for his judicious and excellent letter. How much I was pleased with it, and how free I have made with it, he will see from the motto, prefixed to the *Winter Piece*. His candid and weighty observations, have induced me to alter the exceptionable passage in the book * ; and will, I hope, incite me to cultivate in my heart that amiable spirit of candour, which hopeth all things.

What I accidentally hinted to Dr. † † †, who favoured me with a sight of Mrs. † † †'s letter, I never imagined, would have been communicated to her, or any person living. Had I suspected any such consequence, I should certainly have withheld my pen, and concealed what I might happen to think. Because, I neither relish controversy ; nor have strength of mind, or solidity of judgment, sufficient to conduct the procedure of an argument. All my aim, all my desire, is to quicken in my own heart the seeds of practical faith, and vital holiness. If to this, I might be enabled to cherish the same sacred principles, in the hearts of some of my serious and humble acquaintance, I should wish for no other fruit of my labours.—However, as Mrs. † † † thinks worthy of her acknowledgments ; I beg of her to observe, that it is owing, wholly owing, to her adored Redeemer. To him, to him alone, she is obliged (if there be any obligation in the case) for this friendly donation. He has been pleased to declare, that he will look upon such a piece of kindness as done to his own most blessed self. This makes me, this makes all believers, glad to embrace every such occasion, of shewing our thankfulness to our infinitely condescending, gracious Lord.—The action, which Mrs. * * *'s grateful pen called generous, does not arise, as

she expresses it, from any innate nobleness of mind. I remember the time, when this heart was hard as the flint, and these hands tenacious even to avarice. But, it is Jesus the quickening spirit, and the lover of souls, who has made your friend to differ from his *natural* self. If the flinty bowels are melted into compassion, they are melted by a believing consideration of his most precious blood. If the avaricious hands are opened, and made ready to distribute, willing to communicate, they are made so by the free grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore not unto me, not unto me, but unto the great and good Redeemer, are all the returns of gratitude due.

"It is utterly inconsistent, says Mrs. * * *, with my way of thinking, that the son of God should be present at a wedding at all"—But why should it be thought utterly; why, in any degree, inconsistent with his dignity or wisdom, to be present at the solemnization of an ordinance, which he himself instituted; instituted in the state of innocency itself; instituted, for promoting the happiness of our nature, and for perpetuating, with regularity and purity, its very existence?—If our Lord opened his commission, and shewed his divine credentials at a bridal festivity, it was, in my humble opinion, with a very peculiar propriety. Because, it was a significant intimation of the benign and amiable genius of his religion; that he came, not in the austere and recluse spirit of the baptist; came not to forbid, but to sanctify, the lawful and truly valuable comforts of our present being.—It Mrs. ——— pleases to consult the office of matrimony, as it is celebrated by our church, she will find a substantial reason assigned, for our Saviour's gracing this solemnity with his presence, and working his first miracle on this occasion. And the more attentively she reads the scriptures, she will find, in various places, how the son of God delights to honor this sacred institution: since he calls himself the bridegroom of true believers: and declares that he will betroth them to himself in righteousness; since he shadows forth their spiritual union with his blessed self, by that most endearing, most indissoluble of ties, the nuptial; and figures out the satisfaction resulting from his gospel, and even the sublime enjoyments of his heavenly kingdom,

by a marriage-feast. When these things are taken into consideration, I hope, it will appear, that our holy Redeemer acted entirely in character, and conformably to the whole tenor of his revelation, by ennobling, by blessing, the matrimonial festival with his presence.

But, "such a sort of feast is in general a scene of reveling." It is, I must acknowledge, too frequently seen in our nation, and in our age. But was it also a scene of reveling, offensive to modesty, or contrary to sobriety, in earlier times, and among the *Jewish* people? There seems to be a hint in this very narrative, that they were particularly careful to prevent all manner of indecency, or dissolute indulgence. For this reason they appointed a governor of the feast; a principal part of whose office was, to see that no irregularities were committed; but that all was conducted with decorum, as well as oeconomy.—Besides, if some of those festivities are perverted, will it follow, that all are abused? Might not there be some serious set of neighbours, who knew how to be merry after a godly sort, and fulfil the old *Mosaical* rule of rejoicing before the Lord their God? I must have been present at the celebration of a wedding, between christian parties, and among christian friends; where heavenly conversation, and joyful thanksgiving to the adorable author of all our comforts, made the chief and most precious part of our entertainment.—And is there not a sufficient cause to suppose, that the nuptials in question were consummated between persons of such a character? The holy Jesus, his devout mother, and serious disciples, would scarcely have been invited, or would hardly have accepted the invitation, if it was an *irreligious* couple, or a wanton assembly of guests.

But, "in such a mixed multitude, it is hardly supposeable, that all should be serious in their dispositions, or innocent in their conversation."—Would not then the presence of so venerable and divine a person strike an awe upon the most loose inclination? Could not his eternal power and godhead controul the most abandoned temper, and ungovernable tongue? He that intimidated the sacrilegious rabble, when they profaned the temple, and drove them before his single scourge: He that struck prostrate to

the ground a whole band of armed men, only with his word: he who had all hearts in his hand, and could turn them whithersoever he pleased:—He would, doubtless, prohibit, at this juncture, whatever might carry the appearance of an immodest or intemperate freedom. So that Mrs. — need not question, but that, if any of the company was dissolutely disposed, the authority of our Lord's character, and much more the agency of his spirit on their minds, did most effectually restrain all licentiousness.

“One would think, it is farther observed, he might have “improved some occurrence or other, to their information “and advantage.”—That this was not done, is taken for granted. I suppose, because the Evangelist does not expressly record it. But is this a fair deduction, or a satisfactory reason? Are there not many mighty works, which Jesus performed, many edifying conferences, which Jesus held, professedly omitted by the inspired penman?—Was not our Lord's tongue a fountain of wisdom, ever flowing; and a well of life, never exhausted? When did that good shepherd let slip an opportunity of feeding the flock? He went to feasts, in the same spirit, and for the same purpose, as he came into the world; to turn poor mankind from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God. The sun might as well forbear shining, as this sun of righteousness neglect to diffuse his gliding rays, and heavenly knowledge all around.—God's great design, in sending his son into the world, was, that ignorant and sinful men might be reclaimed from the error of their ways, and be made wise unto salvation. And our Saviour solemnly declares, that “*he always did the will of him, that sent him.*” If therefore this declaration be true, and if our Lord's conduct was uniform we cannot but conclude, that at *Caná* as well as throughout all *Galilee*, his mouth was exercised in wisdom, and his tongue talking of judgment. That the words, which dropped from his gracious, his instructive lips, were much sweeter than the richest dainties which the table yielded; much more reviving than even that generous wine, produced by a miracle, which is divine power, on this distinguished occasion, wrought.—This reminds me of another objection couched in the following words:

“ It is harder yet to recencile his behaviour when there—
 “ to increase the wine, when the guests had well drunk,
 “ could tend to no other end, than to promote and encourage intemperance.”—Perhaps, Mrs. — does not sufficiently attend to the narration of the Evangelist. I do not find it asserted, that these guests had well drunk. The expression is used, but applied to other persons, and the custom usual at other ceremonies of this nature. I once was acquainted with a worthy gentleman, who frequently invited to his table the young persons of his neighbourhood; and would take a pleasure in cultivating, by his discourse, the principles of sobriety, industry, and piety, in their minds.— Now, in case he had said, after supper was removed, “ I know very well, my honest neighbours, it is customary with some persons of fortune, to please and to pride themselves in making their visitors drunk. They push the glass briskly round, and press one bumper upon another, till they send their guests staggering to bed.” But—now would any one infer, from such a remark on the practice of others, that this was also the practice at my friend’s house? To form any conclusion, injurious to the sobriety of those guests, seems to be much the same illogical and unreasonable arguing.— But, supposing the expression applied to the guests then present; what is its signification? The original word sometimes signifies no more than to drink with so moderate an indulgence, as innocently to exhilarate the spirits. It is used concerning Joseph’s brethren, when they were treated in his palace, and had portions sent from his table, *Gen.* xlii. 34. Now, can any one, who is at all acquainted with the character of that exemplary patriarch, imagine that he would permit his brethren, in his own presence, to transgress the rules of temperance; much less can any one, who really believes in Jesus, and seriously considers the design of his coming into the world, allow himself to suspect, that he should furnish fresh wine for those, who (in the obnoxious sense of the word) had well drunk already? Could he, who is our sanctification, the Lord our purifier, administer to our inordinate gratifications?

“ Yes, says Mrs. * * *, because this increase of wine
 “ could tend to no other end, than to promote and encourage

upon as a censorious reflection, but as a proof of the politeness of her own sentiments.

However, when she has an opportunity of consulting the ancient writers, she will find, that their language had less of compliment, and more of sincerity, than ours. It was so plain and artless, that persons of the best breeding have addressed ladies of the highest quality by this very name; and without intending any slight, or giving the least affront. — She may remember, that the eleven brethren, when pleading before the governor of Egypt, pleading for their liberties, or even their very lives; when, if ever, their expressions would be most carefully guarded, and full of the utmost reverence, yet use this (to modern ears) uncourtly style, *the man*; meaning the viceroy himself, *Gen. xlv. 26.* — Surely, Mrs. † † † cannot forget, that our Lord, in his last moments, calls his mother by the very same appellation. Much less can she suspect, that he could be wanting in respect and tenderness, when his concern for the parent of his flesh triumphed over the agonies of the cross.

Perhaps, the substance of the reply may be thought somewhat unkind. I believe it should be translated, “*Woman, what hast thou to do with me?*” that is, in such instances as this; wherein my deity is concerned, and an interposition of my omnipotence is requisite. I would have thee to know, once for all, that, in affairs of this nature, thou hast no authority over me, neither does it become thee to direct me. — She was so overforward; she took much upon her; and the answer was intended for a plain and serious rebuke. Accordingly, the humble mother, like one sensible of her misconduct, acquiesces with silent submission; and never offers (through the whole course of the history) — to interfere into such a manner any more; but leaves it to his wisdom to determine, both when his divine power should be exerted, and what it should effect.

“*I do not know how it happens,* says Mrs. † † †, *but the more nearly I examine matters of faith, the further I am from assenting to them.* — Will it be acceptable to my dear friend’s * * *, or will it be disgusting, if I attempt to tell her, how this, in the general, happens? She seems to be possessed of great ingenuity of temper, and equal pe-

netration of mind; therefore I cannot think she will take amiss, what I only offer to her impartial consideration, without any application to herself.—It happens, because people are unrenowned by the sanctifying influences of all-wise grace. This is not my specious conjecture, but the infallible declaration of the great searcher of hearts. “*The carnal man, says the wisdom of heaven, receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*” This was the case with Nicodemus. Our Lord’s discourse was a riddle, was quite unintelligible to him, because he was not born of the spirit, had not experienced that sacred change on his heart.—Sometimes it happens, because persons are wise in their own eyes, depending more upon the sagacity of their own judgment, than upon the enlightening grace of God. “*I thank thee O Father,* says our blessed Redeemer, *that whereas thou hast hid these things from* (suffered them to be hid, to escape the discernment of) *the wise and prudent, thou hast revealed them unto babes.*” But who are these, that are wise in their conceits? I answer, they, who study much, but pray little. Who are often at their desk, but seldom on their knee. Often exercise their minds in contemplations, but seldom lift up their hearts in earnest supplications to the Father of lights.—But I must not enlarge. I shall be unacceptably tedious. I must cordially commiserate Mrs. * * *’s afflicted condition. I beg of her to be more frequent, more importunate in her devout addresses to the gracious God. This is proper, peculiarly proper for her distressed circumstances. “*If any be afflicted, let him pray,*” is a recipe prescribed from heaven. But more especially needful, for the unsettled state of her mind. For let me say, and let it not be looked upon as an unfriendly saying. I cannot but fear, that soul is sadly unsettled, far from being fixed on that rock of ages, that only foundation Jesus Christ, who can suppose the blessed Redeemer chargeable with such great indecencies of speech, and still greater impropriety of conduct? Can a mind, which admits such unworthy apprehensions of the great Emmanuel, rely on him as its all-satisfying atonement, its complete righteousness, as the only anchor of

its final, eternal hopes. May the God of all goodness reveal his dear son in our hearts, and in mine; that to us it may be given, to know the mystery of his gospel; that we may see it to be the wisdom of God, and feel it to be the power of God to our salvation. You will, I dare say, heartily join your *Amen* to this important request.—If any fresh difficulties are stated, I beg leave to decline the province of attempting their solution; and would remit all future inquiries to the much clearer judgment, and wiser pen, of our valuable friend Mr. * * *.—Dear Sir, pardon my prolixity; pray for my little piece and its author, and assure yourself of a willing and hearty return of thanks and love.

Your truly, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XLIX.

Weston-Forest, May 1748.

I send, my dear friend the letter, which, by his instigation I write. I send it this night, that if he discerns any thing in it very improper, it may be returned by the bearer, and the needful alterations made.—Methinks, it gives a person a tasteful satisfaction to find favour with judicious, and excellent men. What a transport of delight must it create, to meet with the acceptance of the great judge, the eternal king, the fountain of all perfection! To be admitted into his immediate presence—to be favoured with the brightest manifestations of his divine attributes—to love him with all our soul, and to be infinitely more beloved by him—to be conformed to his glorious, his most amiable image, and so much the more, as ages in an endless succession roll on ages.—This is life, this is blessedness—this is heaven. And this life is in his son—this life

redness is purchased for us sinners by the obedience of Christ—to this heaven Christ is the way, the door, the passport. Oh! let us not doubt, but he will make us meet by his spirit, for the inheritance, which he has obtained by his blood.

LETTER I.

Bath, August 27, 1719.

Rev. Sir,

SUNDAY last, I happened not to be at the Abbey-Church, in the afternoon. But conversing yesterday with a gentleman who was one of your auditors, I desired to have a summary account of your sermon. And truly he gave me such an account, as both astonished, and grieved me. You dignified worldly prosperity at so extraordinary a rate, and almost cannonized the prosperous man. On the other hand, you vilified the glorious Jesus in so scandalous a manner, and set the incarnate godhead to one of the most ignoble and abominable offices. This made me encourage my friend to draw his pen, and send you a word of admonition. And when he declined the task, I could not forbear undertaking it myself. For it would be unkind to you, Sir, to perceive you under such grievous mistake, and not warn you of the error of your ways. Nor would it be less unkind to your master, and my master, to be informed of such preaching, and suffer it to pass current without any animadversion.

If I misrepresent you in any particular, I am ready to retract: and if I have truth on my side, and you, reverend Sir, have spoken unworthy your sacred office, have dishonoured the divine Redeemer, and perverted his everlasting gospel, I trust, you also will be so ingenuous, as to condemn that offensive sermon to the flames, and such doctrines to

silence and darkness. For I assure you, it is, from no ill-ratured spirit of criticism, no moroseness of temper, or fondness for contradiction, but from a sincere concern for the interests of true religion, and the honors of our common Lord, that I take leave to suggest the following hints.

I think you first exhorted people to rejoice, when their circumstances were affluent; and their worldly affairs prosperous; you enforced this palatable advice, by the precepts of scripture; and lest it should not be received with a proper welcome, you further urged it upon your hearers, by the example of our blessed Saviour. In opposition to this strain of teaching, permit me to observe,

1. That worldly prosperity is no sufficient cause for a christian to rejoice.
2. That it is often one of the sorest evils that can befall a person.
3. To sketch out the true nature of scriptural prosperity; or discover, what is that solid ground for rejoicing, which the oracles of God recommend.

First, *worldly prosperity is no sufficient cause for rejoicing, because worldly things are empty, and unsatisfactory.* That which is lighter than vanity itself, cannot possibly give substantial joy. If we build for contentment upon sublunary things, we rear our edifice upon the sinking sand. You can no more bring satisfaction out of any thing created, than you can carve an image out of the rising smoke, or fill your belly with the east wind. Those, who rejoice only (and you, dear Sir, assigned no other cause for rejoicing) because they have abundance of earthly things richly to enjoy, are like some bewildered and benighted traveller, pierced with cold, dripping with wet, that leaps for joy because he finds a glow-worm under the hedge. Alas! this is in no wise able to direct his wandering feet, to light him through the dismal gloom, or to warm his benumbed limbs; no more than it is able to supply the place of the sun, and dart its faint glimmer through the universe.—The pleasures, which a superior fortune turnish out, oh! how soon do they
—*—* grow stale, and pall upon the appetite! how easily may

a thousand accidents snatch them from our embrace, or dash them to pieces in our arms! how certainly must we forsake them in a very little time; and when we have taken a few more pleasant morsels, a few delicious draughts, eat and drink again no more for ever. And what a wretched disproportionate delight is this, for an immortal mind, which is to survive the dissolution of the globe; which is to live unnumbered ages, when all, that our eyes have seen, is passed away and gone?

Again: *worldly prosperity is no sufficient cause for rejoicing, because a person may possess this, and have neither faith, nor grace.* There is no manner of connection between faith and wealth. The poor frequently receive the gospel, while numbers of the rich reject their own happiness. And without faith it is impossible to please God; it is unreasonable and unavailing to rejoice. The believer, indeed has a commission, has a privilege, *via*, has a patent, for rejoicing. The Christian has all joy and peace in believing. All—you see here is a monopoly, faith has engrossed this precious commodity. None is to be procured, but from her.—And as for grace, talents of gold may be in the coffers, and not one grain of grace in the heart. Those who call whole lordships their own, cannot, perhaps, say, that they have received the holy ghost. And while they are destitute of this divine principle, I can call them nothing but *wretches*. You may add illustrious, right honorable, and worshipful, if you please; but still they are miserable *wretches*, unless Christ, the hope of glory, be formed in their souls. The holy ghost, you know, Sir, is called the comforter, because it is his amiable office to administer consolation to his people. He giveth joy, and who can make sad-ness? But what if he withdrew his benign influences, who or what can create satisfaction? Silver shoes may as well charm away the racking pangs of a gouttified foot, or golden dust quench the thirst of a parched throat, as a lay worldly abundance, as all worldly plenty, beguile real joy, without the communications of the comforting spirit.—You forget, Sir, the *prayer*, which you daily offer up in the congregation. In *them*, you acknowledge, “that the world cannot give peace.” And if not peace, surely not joy. If not

the fruit, surely not the blossom. "*There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*" And all are wicked, who are void of faith, and unrenewed by grace. All can counter to the divine declaration, who bid such persons rejoice, though they should have every kind of prosperity, that a carnal heart can wish.

Once more : *Wordly prosperity is no sufficient cause for rejoicing, because a man may possess this, and be a child of wrath notwithstanding.* Providence often scatters temporary things among the tents of his enemies. They have children at their desire, and leave the rest of their substance for their babes. These are the husks which the swine are permitted to eat. God's dearest servants, those who are heirs of glory, are frequently seen to have been without any share of them, while the most abandoned sinners have them to the full. Lazarus has not a house to lay his head in, while the voluptuary dwells in apartments cieled with cedar, and painted with vermillion. Lazarus has not enough to purchase one morsel of meat, must be beholden to charity for the least crumb of provision ; while his hard hearted neighbour drinks wine in bowls, and eats the choicest of the flock ; is clothed in purple and fine linen, and fares sumptuously every day.—Who then can rationally rejoice in that, which is no pledge of the divine acceptance ; which carries with it no proof of our reconciliation to that eternal majesty, whose smile is inconceivable bliss, whose frown is insupportable woe ?—A wealthy and successful person, if he be considerate as well as fortunate, must go home from such a sermon arguing in this manner : " the preacher saith unto me to rejoice in my wordly goods. But how can I find complacency in such perishing possessions, when, perhaps, I may be an outcast from heaven, and have no place in that kingdom, which endureth for ever. How can I take pleasure in these dainties, which replenish my table, when perhaps the heavy wrath of God may fall upon me, while the meat is yet in my mouth. This sumptuous furniture, this glittering equipage, these delicious treats, how can I take real satisfaction in them, when, for ought I know, a hand writing upon the wall, may be de-

"renouncing my doom? If God would lift up the light of
 "his countenance upon me; if I was sweetly ascertained
 "of his good will, then I could rejoice unfeignedly. But
 "as for these large revenues, and tides of success, which
 "are so much extolled by the preacher, they may prove
 "like the rich pastures that fatten the ox for the knife."

Will you have patience with me, Sir, if I proceed to
 prove.

2. That worldly prosperity, is so far from being an adequate cause for our rejoicing, that it is frequently one of the worst and most mischievous evils.—This I am sure was the opinion of the archbishop *Usher*. That most renowned and excellent prelate, in his younger days, had a continued series of prosperity. *Health*, impaired by no attacks of sickness; *credit* sullied by no breath of scandal; and *success* interrupted by no disappointment, or disastrous turn. And what emotion did this occasion in that devout and judicious person's mind? did his heart dance within him for joy? Did he bless himself on this behalf? No.—But he was under sad apprehensions, lest God had forsaken him, and given him over to a reprobate course. He feared, that his heavenly father, because he spared the rod, hated the child. That not being brought under the discipline of providential correction, he was a bastard, and not a son of the Lord Almighty.—How diametrically opposite, was this way of thinking, to your way of preaching! and whether it was not a very sober and just method of thinking, let the following considerations determine.

Worldly prosperity is apt to attach men to earthly things. When success swells their sails, and all proceeds according to their wish, oh! how prone are we to disregard Jesus, and everlasting ages! many are immoderately fond of the world, because they have swam sweetly down the stream of prosperity; who, probably, would have been weaned from its delights, and indifferent to its goods, in case they had toiled upon the craggy cliffs of some intervening adversity. When they walk always upon roses, and meet with no thorns in their paths, the consequence is an acquiescence in

their present station, and remissness in seeking the joys of an invisible world. A contentment in the things that are seen, without any aspirations after the things that are not seen, is the most unhappy condition imaginable, and is generally the offspring of worldly prosperity. And when this worldly prosperity is so highly rated in the calculations of the pulpit, what other effect can possibly attend such lectures, but to glue our affections more closely, and rivet them more inseparably, to these trifles of a day?

Again; *Worldly prosperity is frequently a mischievous evil, because it is apt to make men proud.* They come in no misfortune like their folk; says the psalmist, and this is the cause, that they are so holden with pride. Prosperity is often a lucious poison. It bloats and puff men up with an over-weening opinion of themselves. It intoxicates the mind, and makes it drunk with self-conceit. It prompts people to idolize themselves, and contemn others. The intolerable arrogance of the *Babylonish* monarch, what was it owing to, but his vast and uninterrupted successes? He measured his merit by the length of his purse, and challenged a veneration proportionable to the extent of his dominions. This vile, rank weed, thrives in the hot-beds of honor, wealth, and carnal pleasure. Whereas it might never have reared its head, in the colder climate of tribulation, or scantiness of circumstances.

Once more; *Worldly prosperity is frequently a pernicious evil, because it renders men carnally secure.* It case-hardens the mind against all the threatening, and makes it deaf to the invitations of heavenly wisdom. It is a stupifying potion, and lulls the soul into a fatal forgetfulness of everlasting things. Those, who were lusty and strong, in our Saviour's days, joined with the impious multitude in despising the veiled divinity: but those, who were diseased in their bodies, or disordered in their minds, with eagerness fell prostrate at his sacred feet, and implored his healing hand.—*Fertissant, nisi perissant.*—You cannot but have observed various proofs of this remark in the course of your ministry. You must have seen many persons, who rejected all your counsel, and would none of your reproof, while they

washed their steps in butter, and the rock poured them out rivers of oil. But how loathable were these once refractory worldlings?—How willing to hear the consolations of the gospel, when their sensible delights were perished and gone? How desirous to be informed of a happiness in the heavens, which faded not; when their carnal pleasures had made themselves wings, and were flown away. In the gaiety of their health, and abundance of their plenty, they were settled upon the lees of supineness. But, when the scene was shifted, they cried out with vehemence, what must we do to be saved? This I myself have frequently remarked in the short compass of my experience. Men, who were like an iron sinew in their flourishing condition, have been impressible as melting wax in a reverse of fortune.

We see then, that the prosperity of this world is always dangerous; often pernicious; and too frequently destructive. It yields pleasures that intaruate;—*words that are* poisoned;—delights that stupify. Inasmuch, that a Heathen could say, *nihil intelicius illo, cui nulli intell. contigit.*

Here it may be asked, are we to take no comfort in our portion on earth? Must we become gloomy and melancholy, and go mourning all our days?—Far, far from it. Religion allows us, religion enables us, religion requires us to be joyful. Yea, it gives its faithful adherents to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.—But then it is founded on a principle vastly superior to *that*, which, you, Sir, thought fit to single out and display. It springs from a source, and rests on a basis, which has no manner of dependence on wordly circumstances: this reminds me of another point, I am engaged to clear up, viz.

The true nature of scriptural prosperity.—The scripture is a spiritual scheme. Spiritual goods are what it chiefly recommends, and from spiritual evils, it chiefly deters. Christ's words are spirit: tending to make men not carnally minded: to render them spiritual in their understandings, their affection, their conduct. Inasmuch that one need not scruple to affirm constantly, that the holy scripture

never calls that state, a state of prosperity, which is not grounded on the favor of God: nor ever encourages people to rejoice in any thing, till they are—(1.) reconciled to God,—(2.) interested in Christ,—and (3.) renewed by the Holy Ghost; which, I think, constitute the scriptural prosperity; and I am sure, are the ground-work of all happiness.—First for *reconciliation to God*. This favor is better than life.—Life itself is worthless, and, consequently, all our enjoyments, without this prime fundamental blessing. For this cause, the prince of peace bled to death, that the handwriting of guilt might be blotted out; that the wrath of God might be appeased; and that we, who were enemies, might be brought near through his blood. This is the door to all good. Enter in by this gate, ye sons of men, or else you will inevitably miscarry in your search after felicity. If you seek for bliss, and bottom not your expectations on this rock, you are sure to be disappointed of your hope. I can no more have true comfort in any possession, till I have redemption through my Redeemer's passion, than that unfortunate captive could rejoice in the royal banquet, that was before him, when a ponderous sword edged and unsheathed, was hanging by a slender thread, and shaking every moment over his head.—2d. *An interest in Christ*. This is another pillar to support our felicity. Therefore, our blessed Lord directing us in the way to our true good, says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." The everlasting kingdom of heaven as the end, and the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, as the way. Till the one is our actual possession, and the other our certain reversion, we may look for real satisfaction, but shall find none. Apply to all the creatures; rattle all their charms; taste all their sweets; you will perceive them to be altogether lighter than vanity itself; without an union with Christ, and an establishment in his merits. 3d.—*Renovation of mind*, is another ingredient of the prosperity delineated in scripture. Till the soul be sanctified, it is in a state of grievous disorder; like a body, all whose bones are out of joint.—And, oh! what joy can be tasted in such a condition? Till divine grace have the ascendant within us; till the king-

dom of God be let up in our hearts; we are in bondage to temptation. Vile affections dominate over us. The devil and our own lusts play the tyrant in our breasts. We are like slaves under a galling yoke, and like lepers under a noisome distemper. Therefore the Psalmist says, When I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it. Till thy image be re-stamped upon my heart, I never expect to see god. While we are in the bond of iniquity, we must infallibly be in the gall of bitterness.

This is the prosperity celebrated in the scriptures. Of this every believer is a partaker; and you will please to remember, that every exhortation to rejoicing, which we meet with in these inspired books, are addressed to such persons only. They give not the least invitation to any one, nor the least licence, to rest satisfied, much less to rejoice, till they are brought into such circumstances of reconciliation with heaven, and renovation of mind. Nor have you, Sir, any warrant to say to yourself, or your people, "Soul take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry, because thou hast much goods laid up for many years." This is the epicure's creed. The lively oracles bear their testimony against such conclusions. They style all the unregenerate, fools. And to such, worldly abundance is not matter for mirth, but matter for ruin. For the prosperity of fools shall destroy them." Be they grand as *Nebuchadnezzar*, in as much affluence as *Ahasuerus*, honored as *Herod* was by the applauding multitude, yet every page of scripture says to them, as *Jehu* to *Sorani's* messenger, "what has thou to do with peace." And, however, some smooth-tongued preachers may flatter and cajole them in their pomp; however, they may prophesy smooth things, and solicit them to rejoice on such a footing, as the Lord has not made a ground for rejoicing; yet an apostle bespeaks them in very different language: "go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl. The teacher sent from God has other tidings to tell them, "woe unto you that are rich, that are full, for ye have your consolation, ye shall hunger hereafter." And, in another world, they may hear this awful admonition sounding in their ears, "son, remember that thou in thy life-time receiv-

"*edst thn good things*:" those which thou accountedst good, not that they really were good. But only appeared so, to thy distempered judgment, and vitiated taste.

Surely, Sir, it must have been perfectly prudent, or rather absolutely necessary, to caution your audience against so fatal a mistake: especially since they consist of the gay, the grand, the pleasurable. A vigilant minister would certainly give them to understand, that wealth and plenty is, by no means, the prosperity which the spirit of God commends. That joy, without the loving kindness of the Lord, is a mere chittera. That none are entitled to this medicine of life, but those, who can lay their hand upon their hearts, and say, with a faith unfeigned, my sins are all forgiven, through the atonement of the slaughtered lamb; my peace is made with the eternal God; and the spirit of Jesus Christ dwells in me. This is that, which justifies, which produces joy. Then, indeed, and not till then, the wise man's advice may be thy practice: "go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth both thee, and thy works." Then thou mayest take comfort in thy earthly accommodations, as so many little appendages of thy bliss; not as the essence, which constitutes it; but as the cement, which serves to fill up some little interstices, and render the whole somewhat more compact. And even, in this case, our blessed master, (who bid his disciples not to rejoice, because the devils were subject unto them, but because their names were written in heaven) would, probably, caution us not to rejoice, because we have all worldly things copiously to enjoy, but because we are pardoned, justified, and sanctified.

Upon the whole. Suppose worldly prosperity was not oftentimes a mischievous evil, which it undoubtedly is.—Suppose it was a substantial ground for christian rejoicing, which it really is not.—Suppose this was the scriptural prosperity, which notion is, I trust, sufficiently disproved.—In a word, suppose the whole tenour of your doctrine to be true, whereas it seems to be palpably false: yet what good, in the name of wonder, can you possibly propose by such preachments? You cannot but be sensible, that we are all

strongly addicted to inferior things. We are already too fond of worldly goods, too impetuous in our pursuit of sensual gratifications. We want, we extremely want a curb to check our career, and you clap a spur in our sides. You employ your eloquence as a provocative, in a case that cries aloud for restrictives. Alas ! Sir, you have no occasion to push the headlong torrent !—But I have done with this point : have nothing more to add upon this head : unless it be to recommend to your serious attention, that alarming verdict, pronounced by infinite wisdom, “ *He that liveth in pleasure, is dead while he liveth.*” Dead to God, dead to grace ; a dead christian, though a living animal. Compare, reverend Sir, this declaration with the tendency of your doctrine. Then, I assure myself, you will not redden with indignation at these plain remonstrances. But rather, (as I should in your case) turn pale with grief, at your past teachings ; and tremble with fear for the consequences of them.

Thus much for your divinity ; Now, Sir, if you please for your logic. We have canvassed your doctrine ; let us next consider the argument, with which you establish it. This is, if possible, ten thousand times more exceptionable than the tenet itself. For after having told your audience, that the carrol delight, which you so earnestly press to take, is agreeable to the reason of things, is consonant to the designs of providence, you think proper to add, that it is also countenanced by our Saviour’s example. Since, at a certain marriage feast, when the wine fell short, they wrought a miracle, and furnished themselves with a fresh supply on purpose, that the mirth might not die. This was your expression. Could any debauched libertine, at a drunken club, have derogated more contumeliously from the dignity of our Lord’s behaviour ? Jesus, the mirror of purity, the fountain of wisdom, of whom it is testified, “ that he did “ all things well.”

This wise and glorious being is represented, not by an abandoned sot, but by a minister of the gospel, as exerting his omnipotence to prolong a merry bout. Oh ! that it might not be told in *Gath*, or published in the streets of *Askelon* ! but, — *fugit irrevocabile verbum* ; you cannot revoke the words. The only reparation you can make to the

injured Jesus, or the offended christian, is to give us a sermon of recantation; and antidote the poison that has been propagated.

But, I would hope, it is too gross to spread. "*That the mirth may not die,*" is an assertion, which must startle every hearer. Why this a common virtue might have prevented, as well as an almighty being. A few flasks, from the tavern would have answered this end. Most ignoble purpose! unworthy, altogether unworthy so august, divine, and admirable person.—Oh! what a handle does this yield to infidels for profane banter! that Jesus should descend from the heaven of heavens, and come into the world, vested with uncontrollable power, on so poor, groveling, and so did an errand! that a part of his business, in the state of humanity, should be to guard against such idle mirth, as owes its birth to a bottle! the soldiers, that stripped our Lord of his apparel, and mocked his sacred person; that spit upon his blessed face, bulletted his divine head, and loaded him with all manner of scurrilities and indignities; did not count (in my opinion) so flagrant an abuse, as a modern preacher in one of his studied solemn harangues. They took him to be a meer man; they pronounced him a vile man; and, therefore, offered him such opprobrious affronts. But, you, Sir, acknowledge him to be God; you know him to be infinitely wise, and yet make him a lacquey to the most errand trifle, a drudge to man's carnal indulgences.—Suppose, both our houses of parliament, after the maturest deliberation, should employ the whole army of the nation, to clear away all obstructions for a butterfly in her flowery range, or to see that a silly kitten go on unmolested in her sportive gambols; would you extol the wisdom of our senators? Would you not cry shame upon their conduct? Now, your assertion is full as depreciatory to the consummate prudence, and exemplary purity of our divine master: since you set them both on work, joined with his irresistible might, only to furnish out a little more gaiety, a little more laughter, to a set of carousers, whom you describe as pretty well in for it already.

"*That the mirth might not die.*" that is, that those who were already made merry with liquor, might go on in their

joyal delights: till they added drunkenness of their thirst. For when people are thus exhilarated, to take fresh draughts, and pour down more wine, must indeed make them, as a professed sinner profanely expresses himself, on this very occasion, more than half seas over. So that when you give an evasive flourish or two, and would have your hearers to believe, that you are no advocate for intemperance, it is plain, you are only complimenting the cause of sobriety. This interpretation put upon our Lord's conduct, knocks all such sham pretences on the head. For, if he wrought the miracle with such a view, and for such sort of people, all the world cannot clear him from being a promoter of excess; and if he did not, all the world cannot acquit you Sir, from the most abusive misrepresentation of your Redeemer.

"*That the mirth might not die!*" What could a lowly rake have done at his riotous table, worse than that, which you ascribe to the pattern of all perfection? My blood grows chill: my thoughts recoil at so horrid a position. Any gentleman, of tolerable seriousness, when he perceives his friends are got merry with his drink, would rather withdraw the glass, than add fuel to the flame. For my part, I should think myself an abettor of excess, and little better than a pimp for debauchery, if, when men are merry in their cups, I should supply them with means of driving on the wanton humour. And yet,—be amazed, O ye heavens, and be horribly afraid, O earth! a minister, in the midst of a thronged congregation, charges this very practice upon the most immaculate Lamb of God!—Oh! Sir, how could he, who came to be our sanctification, administer to our inordinate gratifications? How could he who has enjoined us not to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof, be instrumental to continue a luxurious revel?—Blessed Jesus, surely that is fulfilled which was spoken by thy prophet, thou art wounded in the house of thy friends. Thy character is debased, thy doctrines adulterated, by those, who profess themselves adorers of the one, and expounders of the other. Oh! that ever the christian pulpit should be-

come a porch to the temple of Bacchus ! and a christian preacher act the part of a paragon for the dining-house !

Do you intend to please, Sir, or to profit your audience, by these admonitions ?—You can please none but of corrupt minds, whose God is their belly, who mind earthly things.—You can profit none but those, whose heaven is to be found in the juice of the grape.—They can serve no other end, but to give a sort of sanction to their extravagancies. Your lectures, perhaps, may be recollected with applause on the ale-bench, and pleaded among a circle of jolly ropers. But I assure you, Sir, they are heard by the serious and devout, with the utmost sorrow, and with equal detestation. Their ears are wounded, and their hearts bleed, under the sound of such Bacchanalian doctrines.

May I now be permitted to declare my sentiments, with regard to that passage of scripture, which you have so unhappily perverted ?

As to the mirth you seem so fond of, there is no mention of it in the sacred narrative: For Christ went not about to spread the laugh among his company, but to make them serious, sober, and wise unto salvation. If he vouchsafed his presence at entertainments, and sat at the tables of sinners, it was with a gracious design of instructing and converting them in their own houses. He came to feasts with the same spirit, and for the same purposes, as he came into the world : to turn poor mankind from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God : so that none can imagine, when he was in the room, that there could be any thing like that licentious diversion, which too generally prevails in our merry meetings. If they did rejoice, they rejoiced, doubtless, after a godly sort. They rejoiced in the precious and instructive words, that dropped from Christ's lips, as sweets from an honey-comb. They rejoiced to have so divine a Prophet raised up unto God's people, and to have the honor of so illustrious a personage amongst them. They rejoiced, without all peradventure, to see, and hear, and handle the word of life.

As for that expression, which we translate well drunk,—profane wits, I know, raise mighty triumphs upon it : but

in truth, they are Babel buildings, and proofs of nothing but their own folly. They likewise give us to understand, that their want of wine is no excuse, as their malignity to christianity. But, surely, they must be as full as errant infants, as they are shameless sons, who can offer to fetch the least shadow of a plea for riotous indulgences from this passage. Since, let the meaning of the word be ever so loose and exceptionable, yet nothing can be concluded from thence, against the economy and decorum of that entertainment, because the governor speaks only of the usual custom at other treats. He says not a word, good or bad, of the guests that were present at that bridal festival. It must, therefore be, not only precarious, but ridiculous and absurd, to infer the disorderly proceedings of those people, from what the ruler observes concerning others. I once was acquainted with a worthy gentleman, who frequently invited to his table the young persons of his neighbourhood; and would take a pleasure in instilling or cultivating in their minds the principles of sobriety, industry and piety. Now in case, he had said, after supper was removed, "I know very well, my honest neighbours, it is customary with some persons of fortune, both to please and pride themselves in making their visitants drunk. They push the glass briskly round, and press one bumper upon another, till they send their guests staggering to bed." But,—now, would any one be so stupid, as to infer from this acknowledgment of the practice of others, that this also was the practice of my friend? Yet this they may do, with as much justness and solidity of reasoning, as to deduce any maxim in favor of excess from the speech of the Archutalinas (or master of the feast.)

Evident, I think, it is, that this expression, whatever be its exact import, is in no wise referable to the condition of those guests; so that we allow our adversaries too much advantage, by admitting any of their remarks upon its signification. We should wrest this weapon out of their hands, which they brandish so formidably, rather than guard against its strokes.—But, in case, it was applicable to the n; yet it is most monstrous, to suppose it significant of the least

deviation from temperance. For had we not known the company to be of the most exemplary behaviour, and heavenly minded spirit; had they been a parcel of irreligious and lewd fellows, instead of the virgin mother, and the Redeemer's disciples, yet it would be impossible to conceive, that any thing, which had the least approach towards surfeiting and drunkenness, should be tolerated, when Jesus himself was in the midst of them. Before so venerable and divine a person, they would not dare to allow themselves in any misbecoming indulgencies, or indecencies of carriage. Besides, had their inclinations been ever so abandoned or impetuous, his eternal power and godhead would have restrained them. He, who intimidated the sacrilegious rabble, when they profaned the temple, and drove them before his single scourge; he, who struck prostrate to the ground, a whole band of armed men, only with his word; he, who had all hearts in his hand, and could manage them as he pleased; would, doubtless, have forbid at this juncture, whatever bordered upon dissoluteness.

Should any one inquire, for what cause then did Christ work this miracle, if not to revive the dying church?—I answer, several noble reasons are assignable and obvious.

One; to furnish a supply for fresh guests, which on those occasions were continually pouring in. That the feast might be prolonged to its usual period, and all, that came, might be moderately refreshed. For I can, by no means, imagine, that his fresh supply was intended for those, who had cheered themselves already with a sufficient quantity. This indeed is what your sermon takes for granted, or else your application is frivolous and impertinent. But I promise myself, when you give it a second consideration, you will wonder, how so unworthy a thought come into your mind; and be sorry, that it should ever proceed from your lips. Since it is so intirely repugnant to the whole character, conduct, and preaching of our Lord Jesus.

Another reason might be to reward the married pair, for their hospitality to himself, and his followers. To give early notice to the world, that none should be losers by shewing

kindness to him or his. That every piece of respect paid to Jesus, and every kindness exercised towards his family, should meet with a full recompence of reward. Thus did he prepare an extensive fund for those, who had forsaken houses, lands, relations, and their earthly all, for his sake ; prepare a fund for their subsistence, by disposing people to entertain and accommodate them, when they should be sent forth, without staff or scrip, or money in their purses.

Another cause, (and that which is remarked by the holy historian,) was, *to manifest forth his glory*. To give a most conspicuous display of his Messiahship. He opened as it were, his commission, and shewed his divine credentials. Which was done with perfect propriety, in a public manner, before more spectators than his own attendants. And whatever effect it might have upon others, it confirmed the faith of his disciples. Seeing this incontestible proof of his mission, it is said, they believed on him : and were thenceforth inviolably attached to his person and ministry.

Other reasons may be suggested, and those exceeding sound and useful. Such as point out a noble and deep significance in this miracle ; make it rich with divine and spiritual meaning : and, upon this footing, a more delicious feast for our souls, than wines of the finest flavour, and most generous quality, are to our animal nature.

For instance : it might signify the superior richness of those comforts, which his gospel was introducing into the world. That they exceeded those broached by *Moses*, and the law, as much as the pure blood of the grape, excels the water of our common wells. That is flesh and blood would be a sovereign source of alacrity and consolation to his people ; gladden and revive their hearts, like some exquisite cordial ; strengthen and invigorate their minds, like the best bodied wines.

This particular season of a marriage ceremony, was probably chosen, in order to intimate the necessity of being espoused and united to Christ, before we can be partakers of these evangelical delights. Divorced we must be from our old husband, the law ; divorced from the covenant of works ; and no longer wedded, by self-opiniativeness, to our own

righteousnesses; but married, by the bond of a lively faith, to that everlasting bridegroom, in order to taste those comforts, and have our share in those joys.

A reason fixed upon by our church is, that Christ would hereby put an honor upon the matrimonial state; by gracing the solemnity with his sacred company, and performing his first public miracle on this occasion. A fine admonition this, to render us more than ordinarily solicitous, to have the favourable concurrence of Jesus, both when we devise, and when we take, so important a step. Because, the tranquillity and happiness of our subsequent life depends, very much, on this alteration of our condition—That we should, by all means, marry in the Lord; and implore his spiritual gracious presence at the wedding; which will improve the advantages, and sanctify the enjoyments, of that comfortable state; will, as it is delicately figured out in the metaphor, turn our water into wine.

It might also be intended to remind us, that the comforts, even of animal life, were recovered by the second Adam, as they were forfeited by the first Adam. When our first parents were guilty of rebellion against their Maker, they lost all right to the valuable productions of nature. This, indeed was their dowry originally settled upon them; but by their disloyalty is become confiscated. Justice seized upon their inheritance, and vengeance said, cursed be the ground for your sakes. Christ, in this exigency, immediately interposed; took off the attainder, and restored to poor Adam and his posterity, the precious fruits of the earth. These blessings, derived from Christ's Mediation, were very properly recognized at a wedding; because, straightway after the marriage of the first couple, they were alienated and sequestered.

This, Sir, is a way of expounding our Redeemer's miracles, well worthy your consideration, if not your imitation. In this light they appear, not barely so many witnesses of his being the Messiah, but so many living mirrors of his mediatorial mercies. In which we discern a most expressive figure of those spiritual good things, which we extremely want, and may fully enjoy through Jesus Christ.—The

marvellous things brought to pass by the agency of prophets, apostles, and holy men of old, were indisputable vouchers for their being sent of God. But our Redeemer's works had a farther excellency, and answered a diviner end.—They held forth and presented, even, to the senses, a most striking pattern of those spiritual blessings, which sinners may enjoy through their Saviour.—Thus, when he cured the man born blind: what did this signify but his healing the blindness of our understandings, and pouring the day of his glorious gospel upon our internal sight?—When he made the poor paralytic strong and vigorous, that was not able to turn himself on his bed, or to use his limbs:—What a lively emblem was here, both of our disease, and his sovereign help? Of our disease, whereby, we are utterly impotent to do a good work, or think a good thought; of his sovereign help, whereby we are enabled to do all things, through Christ strengthening us. enabled to believe through his grace, and mortify our corruptions, through his spirit.—Was not the filthy leper, a true picture of our loathsomeness, through original defilement, and actual transgressions? And when our Redeemer disdained not to touch this noisome creature, and make him perfectly clean; how appositely did this image point out the condescension of his goodness, in undertaking our redemption; and the efficacy of his blood, in accomplishing our purification?—I might go through the whole series of our Lord's miracles, and discover in them a most significant and complete portraiture of all manner of spiritual blessings.—But the foregoing instances shall suffice. From these hints we may discern an adorable depth of design: unsearchable treasures of contrivance, as well as beneficence, in those operations of his mighty power. Which noble peculiarity gives them a vast pre-eminence above all the miracles in Egypt, and the wonders in the field of Zoan. Renders them so many fine representations of the deliverances and privileges, enjoyable through our ever blessed Immanuel. In a word, renders them a kind of gospel that addresses itself, even to our eyes and so most wisely calculated, both to direct our hopes, and strengthen our faith, in the incarnate God.

LETTER II.

My Dear Friend,

YOUR last found me on the recovering hand ; getting strength and spirits, though by slow degrees.

Soon after I received your favour, a messenger came from *London*, bringing us the alarming news, that my youngest brother was extremely ill. My father's bowels yearned, and his heart bled ; but the infirmities of age, and an unweildy constitution, hindered him from taking the journey. Upon me, therefore, the office fell. Feeble and languid as I was, there was no rejecting such a call. Accordingly, I took coach, and in two days arrived safe at *London* ; where I found my poor brother (the packer) seized with a most violent fever. He was attended by two eminent physicians ; but they proved vain helpers, and miserable comforters. For a considerable time, his stout constitution struggled with the disease, but at last was forced to yield, was forced to drop in the dreadful combat. After attending his sick bed for several days, I had the melancholy task of closing his dear eyes, and resigning him up to death.

Oh ! the uncertainty of mortal things ! What is health, but a glimmering taper, that expires while it shines, and is liable to be extinguished by every motion of the air ? what is strength, but a tender blossom, which is often withered in its fullest bloom ; often blasted, even before it is blown ? — Who could have thought, that I should survive my brother, and follow him to the grave : I sickly and enervated, he always lively and vigorous. In flourishing circumstances, and blest with prosperity in his business ; but now removed to the dark, inactive, silent tomb ; lately married to a beautiful and blooming bride ; but now everlastingly divorced, and a companion for creeping things.

Scarcely was I returned to *Weston*, but another awful providence fetched me from home : my very worthy physician, Dr. *Stonchouse*, who lives and practises at *Northampton*, had the misfortune to lose an amiable and excellent wife.

She also was snatched away in the morning of life, (aged 23) and dead, before I so much as heard of her being disordered. At this valuable friend's house, I was desired to abide some time, in order to assist in writing letters for him, and dispatching his necessary affairs; in comforting him concerning the deceased; and (if the will of God be so) in endeavouring to improve the awakening visitation to our mutual good.

You will surely say, when you read this account, that I have been in deaths oft. Once upon the borders of it myself, and more than once a spectator of its victory over others.—However, my dear friends, let us not be dismayed. Let no man's, at least no believer's heart fail, because of this kind of errors. Though thousands fall beside us, though ten thousands expire at our right hand, and though we ourselves must quickly give up the ghost; yet the word is gone out of our great Redeemer's mouth, and it shall not return unfulfilled, I will swallow up death in victory. He shall smite at the latter day upon the earth; he shall say to the grave, give up, and to the sea, keep not back; release my sons from your dark confinement, and restore my daughters to their everlasting father's arms.—Then, shall we lead him captive, whose captives we were, and triumph eternally over this last enemy. In the mean time, let us lay all our help, all our guilt, upon the divine author of our faith, and captain of our salvation. So shall we no longer be in bondage, through fear of death; but, with the saints of old, overcome through the blood of the lamb; overcome the dread, even while we sink beneath the stroke of this our mortal foe.

What I wrote concerning a firm faith in God's most precious promises, and an humble trust, that we are the objects of his tender love, is what I desire to feel, rather than what I actually experience. Considerations they are, with which I would ply my own heart, in hopes that they may be effectually set home by divine grace; in hopes, that they may become the happy means of making me strong in faith and enabling me thereby to give glory to God.

Your remarks on this important point are exceedingly judicious, and perfectly right. After which, it will be insignificant to my friend, and look like arrogance in his correspondent, to add, that they exactly coincide with my sentiments.

I do not doubt, but there are many dear children of the blessed God, who are in a much better condition, with regard to his favour, than they can easily be persuaded to believe. Many sincerely righteous, for whom light is sown; many true-hearted, for whom joyful gladness is prepared.—Which, though latent in the furrows of inward tribulation, or oppressed under the clouds of misgiving fears, shall, in another world, spring up with infinite increase, and yield an everlasting harvest.

The humble hope, mixed with trembling, you have very pathetically described, in the breathings of a renewed soul, panting after God; languishing for the tokens of his love; ardently desiring the final enjoyment of him in his heavenly kingdom, and relying wholly on the meritorious passion, pleading nothing but the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ.—Happy, without all peradventure, happy the heart, in which such affections habitually prevail. They are the beginning of heaven, and will certainly be completed in glory. They constitute a signal part of that meekness for the inheritance of saints in light, concerning which the apostle speaks, and which is one of the surest evidences of our designation to that purchased possession. Christ will in no wise, on no consideration of past provocation, or present corruption, either for weakness of faith, or want of confidence, cast out such an one. Let not such an one question, but he, who has begun the good work, will accomplish it even unto the end.

We should, however, as you most pertinently observe, lament all the remains of unbelief, as a misery; repent of them, as a sin; and labour to obtain a more assured faith, both as our duty, and our felicity—the direction for prayer, you know, is, that we draw near in full assurance of faith; and, whatsoever things we ask in prayer, believe that we receive them, and we shall have them.—The Thessalonians

are commended for receiving the gospel with much assurance of faith. Receiving the gospel.—What is meant by that expression? Believing, that the apostles were no impostors; that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah; and that his doctrine came from heaven. This, and abundantly more. I apprehend, it implies.—That Christ died, not for sins only in general, but for their sins in particular; that he bore all their iniquities, in his own bleeding body, and agonizing soul, on the cursed tree; that, all their crimes being fully expiated, the most rigorous justice would not demand a double payment for the same debt; and consequently, that there remained no condemnation for them.—This is the glad tidings, to which they not only attended, and credited with a speculative assent; but with a personal application of it, each to his particular case. And why should not we do the very same?—I shall only submit further on this head, what I take to be a very clear and accurate explanation of the apostle's celebrated definition of faith.—“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;” putting us into a kind of present possession of the promises, and setting divine truths before the mind in all the light and power of demonstration. For this beautiful illustration of the inspired writer, I am obliged to an excellent clergyman of this neighbourhood; who lately favoured us with an admirable visitation sermon, and, for the good of the public, was prevailed on to print it.—You will give me leave to close the topic with a distinction, which I have somewhere read, or on some occasion heard. A distinction, which, I think, properly adjusts the case under consideration; and settles it, neither on a precarious, nor a discouraging issue.—Many have the faith, which bringeth salvation, who have not that faith, which produceth assurance; but none have the former, who do not espire after, and endeavour to possess the latter.

On the whole, I heartily beseech the adorable and infinitely gracious giver of every perfect gift, to establish, strengthen, settle us in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; that he would fulfill in us all the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power. And, I dare say, we

shall often lift up our hearts to our heavenly father, and breath out that ardent petition, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!"—If we have such frequent recourse to the overflowing and inexhaustible fountain of all good; if we add to our prayers meditation on the merits of Jesus, and on the sure word of promise; our faith will grow; the grain of mustard seed will be quickened, and shoot up into a tree; the little drop will become a stream, and the stream spread into a river. The waters, that issued from the sanctuary were, at first, deep to the ankles only; then they rose to the knees; soon they reached the loins; and were afterwards waters to swim in.

The *Contemplations* you are pleased to enquire after, after long delays, or a very slow procedure, are at length launched into the world. What may be their fate, I can not conjecture. Whether, by the general disapprobation, they may be unfortunately becalmed; or, by the severe criticisms, may split on the rocks of censure; or, foundering through their unworthiness, may sink in oblivion; or, blessed by a gracious providence, may gain the haven of public acceptance, and import those most valuable commodities, pleasure, which improves, and improvement which delights. When they reach your parts, be so good, dear Sir, as to peruse them, first with the humble child-like spirit of a christian, who seeks religious advantage in all, that he reads: Next, with the candid rigour of a friend, saying, as you proceed, here his thoughts are redundant, and want the pruning knife; there they are deficient, and call for the grater's hand; here the language is of cure, and perspicuity is the only remedy; there it is inexpressive, and must be rendered more nervous, in order to reach the judgment, or strike the passions.—Above all, let me beg of you to implore a blessing from the most high God, both upon the author and his piece; that the one may be a monument of divine mercy; the other a polished shaft, in the great Immanuel's quiver.

Should not a sense of his look make us more ardently desirous of bringing others to partake of that everlasting bliss, which we humbly expect as our final portion; and of which

some foretastes have been indulged, even in our present state? Should we not be stirred up, with greater assiduity and love, to warn every man, and exhort every man, that they also may be presented perfect in Christ, and live for ever in the light of countenance? The book I mentioned formerly, and took leave to recommend, shall be sent. I have set it apart as a present for my dear friend; and whether my life be prolonged, or my death hastened, neither of these circumstances shall make any alteration in my design. Only let me desire you, in your next, to give me once more the proper directions for conveying it to you. For, some time or other, in my late unsettled state, I have mislaid your letter. Please to present my thanks to Mrs. * * * for her goodness, as I tell her, that they are, and shall be most cordially returned by, her and your most faithful, and

Most affectionate Friend; &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LII.

Rev. Sir,

June 2, 1711.

CAN you accept the will for the deed? It was in my heart, long before this, to have made you my best acknowledgments. And not in my heart only, but actually attempted. In *Buckinghamshire* I remembered my kind and obliging friend, and was with delight set down to give vent to my grateful thoughts. But company on a sudden coming in, arrested my pen; and engaging me till I returned from that place, prevented the execution of my design. Now Sir, my heartiest thanks for your welcome assistance, desire your acceptance. And if the utmost since-

rity can atone for the delay, my conscious heart assures me, they will not be rejected.—My father is wonderfully recovered. Had he lived in the times of superstition, for ought I know, his uncommon disorder might have been ascribed to witchcraft, and his speedy recovery passed current for a miracle. The grave seemed to have opened her mouth for him. We thought him to be on the very brink of death.

*Quam pane furæ regna proserpine,
Et judicantem viderit æcum,
Sedesque descrip'us pium.*

But now God has turned, and refreshed him; yet, and brought him from the deep of the earth gain. He lives and regains his strength daily. Last Sunday he read prayers in his church, and intends next *Sunday* to fill the pulpit.

Mrs. * * *, I hope, is very well; to whom I beg my humble service may be acceptable. Your dear little ones too, the olive-plants about your table, I trust, are in a flourishing state. May the good Lord fulfil his precious promise to them, and the children of your honored neighbour. May he pour his spirit upon your seed, and his blessing upon your offspring, that they may grow up (in knowledge and grace) as willows by the water-courses.—I am just now going to our visitation, held at *Northampton*. I shall appear as a stranger in our *Jerusalem*; knowing few, and known by fewer. Methink, there's something august and venerable in a meeting of the clergy; especially, if one looks upon them as so many agents for the invisible God, and envoys from the court of heaven. I hope to be put in mind of that awful day, when the Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, and bishop of souls, will make his entrance in the clouds of heaven. Then, at that great, final, and decisive entrance, may my dear friend receive the approbation of his judge. May he then be rewarded for his kind offices to myself and others, in everlasting honour and joy.

Yours, &c. &c.
JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LIII.

Weston-Farell, Aug. 8, 1747.

Dearest Mr.

I ought to take shame to myself, for suffering so kind a letter, received from so valuable a friend, to remain so long unanswered. Upon no other consideration, than that of my enfeebled and languishing constitution, can I excuse myself, or hope for your pardon. My health is continually upon the decline, and the springs of life are all relaxing. " Mine age is departing, and removing from me " as a shepherd's tent " Medicine is baffled ; and my physician, Dr. *Storhouse*, who is a dear friend to his patient, and a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ, pities, but cannot succour me. This blessing, however, together with a multitude of others, the divine goodness vouchsafes, to gild the gloom of decaying nature. That I am racked with no pain, and enjoy the free undisturbed exercise of my understanding.

I am much obliged to you for carrying my message to the abbey with so much speed, and conveying to me, with equal dispatch, a satisfactory answer. When you visit the worthy family again, be pleased, after presenting my affectionate compliments, and most cordial good wishes, to inform Mrs. * * *, that my *Contemplations on the Night and Starry Heavens* are sent to the press, and after some corrections made in the dedication, addressed to my godson, Mr. Orchard. It is my humble request to him, and my earnest prayer to God, that he may regard it, not merely as a complimentary form, but as the serious and pathetic advice, of his father's intimate acquaintance, and his soul's sincere friend. Who, in all probability, will be cut off from every other opportunity of fulfilling his sacred engagements, and admonishing him of whatever a christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health.

I forgot, whether I told you, that the last work will be divided into two parts; will be full as large as the two first letters; and therefore the whole will be disposed into two small pocket volumes, on a very neat paper, with an elegant type, in duodecimo. But a convenient number of the new essays will be printed in the octavo-size and character, for the satisfaction of those who purchased the former edition, and may possibly be willing to complete this book.—It was a considerable time, before I could think of a title for the last pieces, that suited their nature, and expressed their design. At length, I have determined to style them *Contemplations on the Night*, and *Contemplations on the Starry Heavens*.

Now I apprehend myself to be near the close of life, and stand, as it were, on the brink of the grave, with eternity full in my view, perhaps my dear friend would be willing to know my sentiments of things in this awful situation. At such a juncture, the mind is most unprejudiced, and the judgment not so liable to be dazzled by the glitter of worldly objects.

I think then, dear Sir, that we are extremely mistaken, and sustain a mighty loss in our most important interests, by reading so much, and praying so little. Was I to enjoy Hezekiah's grant, and have fifteen years added to my life, I would be much more frequent in my applications to the throne of grace: I have read of a person, who was often retired and on his knees, was remarkable for his frequency and fervency in devotion; being asked the reason of this so singular a behaviour, he replied, because I am sensible I must die. I assure you dear Mr. * * *, I feel the weight of this answer; I see the wisdom of this procedure; and, was my span to be lengthened, would endeavour always to remember the one, and daily to imitate the other.

I think also, we fail in our duty, and thwart our comfort, by studying God's holy word no more. I have, for my part, been too fond of reading every thing elegant and valuable, that has been penned in our own language; and been particularly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity. But was I to renew my studies, I

would take my leave of those accomplished trifles. I would resign the delights of modern wit, amusement, and pleasure, and devote my attention to the scriptures of truth. I would sit with much greater assiduity, at my divine master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. This wisdom, whose fruits are peace in life, consolation in death, and everlasting salvation after death; this I would trace, this I would seek, this I would exult in, through the spacious and delightful fields of the Old and New Testament. In short, I would adopt the Apostles' resurrection, and give myself to prayer, and to the word.

With regard to my public ministry, my chief aim should be, to begin in my people's minds a deep sense of their depravity, guilty, undone condition; and a clear believing conviction of the all sufficiency of Christ, by his blood, his righteousness, his intercession, and his spirit to save them to the uttermost. I would always observe, to labour for them in my closet, as well as in the pulpit; and wrestle in secret supplication, as well as to exert myself in public preaching, for the spiritual and eternal welfare. For unless God takes this work into his own hand, what mortal is sufficient for these things.

Now, perhaps, if you sat at my right hand, you would ask, "What is my hope with regard to my future and immortal state?" Truly, my hope, my whole hope, is even in the Lord Redeemer. Should the King of Terrors threaten, I fly to the wounds of the slaughtered Lamb, as the trembling dove to the cleft of the rock. Should Satan accuse, I plead the surety of the covenant, who took my guilt upon himself, and bore my sins in his own body on the tree. Should the law denounce a curse, I appeal to him who hung on the accursed tree, on purpose that all the nations of the earth might be blessed. Should Hell open its jaws, and demand its prey, I look up to that gracious Being, who

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says, deliver him from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom. Should it be said, no unclean thing can enter into heaven; my answer is, the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; "though my sins be as scarlet, through his blood they shall be as white as snow." Should it be added, none can sit down at the supper of the lamb, without a wedding garment, and your righteousnesses, what are they before the pure law, and piercing eye of God, but filthy rags? These I renounce, and seek to be found in Christ Jesus, who is the Lord my righteousness. It is written in the word that is to judge the world at the last day, "By his obedience shall many be made righteous."

So that Jesus, the dear and adorable Jesus, is all my trust. His merits are my staff, when I pass through the valley of the shadow of death. His merits are my anchor, when I launch into the boundless ocean of eternity. His merits are the only riches which my poor soul, when stript of its body, desires to carry into the invisible world. If the God of glory pleases to take notice of any mean endeavours, to honor his holy name, it will be infinite condescension and grace, but his son, his righteous and suffering son, is all my hope, and all my salvation. Dear Sir, pray for me, that the weaker I grow in body, the stronger I may become in this precious faith. May the choicest blessings attend you and your's: a letter would revive him, who is

Your truly, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S. "Though the days are come upon me, in which I have reason to say of worldly things, I have no pleasure in them; yet I find a secret satisfaction in this consideration, that to you, my dear friend, and to others of my candid acquaintance, I may be permitted, even when dead, to speak in my little Treatises; may then, when the author is gone hence, never to be seen in these regions below, Oh! may then testify with some small degree of efficacy, con-

cerning Jesus, that just one ; may then fan the flame of love to his person, and strengthen the principle of faith, in his merits !—Once more, dear Sir, adieu."

LETTER LIV.

Weston-Favell, Aug. 18, 1748.

My Dear Friend,

I Received your letter, full of tenderness, and full of piety last night. The very first thing I apply myself to, this morning, is to acknowledge your favour, and confess my own negligence.—But your affectionate heart will pity, rather than blame me, when I inform you, that a relapse into the disorder, of which I was never thoroughly cured, has brought me very low. Insomuch, that I am unable, either to discharge the duties of life, or to answer the demands of friendship. I have not been capable of preaching, for several Sundays. Pyrmont water, asses milk, and such kind of restoratives, I try, but try in vain.—A great while ago, I had begun a very long letter to my ever esteemed Mr. * * *. In this I proposed candidly to represent the reasons of my belief, with regard to the final perseverance of the true believer. But weakness of spirits, and its never-failing concomitant, imbecility of thought, obliged me to desist. In the new edition of my Meditations, a note is added on this subject, declaring, that I am far from maintaining it, as essential to christianity, or necessary to salvation, &c.—Where I say, what infidels are we in fact ? My meaning is, that we are all, in some measure, chargeable with practical infidelity ; as we are all in some degree carnal, in some degree sinful, while we continue in this mortal body. Considering the infinite veracity, and unchangeable faithfulness of the blessed God, the most exalt-

ed saints have too much cause to lament their deficiency in point of faith, and evermore to cry out, Lord, help our unbelief!

An humble, well grounded assurance of our reconciliation to God, is an unspeakably precious blessing. It is what all should seek, and many have attained. A gentleman told me, a few days ago, that though he was often solicited to sin, often defiled with corruption, yet he had no matter of doubt concerning his everlasting salvation, for these twenty years. On trying occasions, that seemed to endanger his final happiness, he fled, I presume, to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. He viewed by faith, the infinite, (Oh transporting truth!) the infinite satisfaction, made by the bleeding Immanuel; and could not but confide, that a divine expiation was more powerful to save, than all past sins or present infirmities to destroy. This is the white stone, of which Job was happily possessed: I know that my Redeemer liveth; and this sweet confidence supported him under all his tribulations. This is that earnest of the spirit in our hearts, of which St. Paul makes mention, and with which he was endued: "We know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building made with hands eternal in the heavens." And, in the full assurance of this blessed hope, may you, my dear friend, be every day more established, strengthened, settled!

If, at any time, I am favoured with this heavenly gift, it is derived from such comfortable scriptures: the son of the most high came into the world, to save sinners: he died, the just for the unjust: he poured out his soul for transgressors. And since you and I know ourselves to be sinners, unjust, transgressors, why should we not take to ourselves the comfort here offered for our acceptance? Why should we not make use of the privilege, here consigned over to our enjoyment, and claim the legacy, in these clauses of our dying master's testament, most evidently bequeathed to our souls? To found our expectations on this bottom, will be a means both of humbling and exalting us; of filling us with shame, and filling us with hope; that we may abhor

ourselves, and yet rejoice in God our Saviour.—Many build their hopes, upon their religious duties, and righteous deeds; such a building must unavoidably be shaken by every temptation, and stopped by every working of corruption. These are, in no wise, the foundation, but evidences rather that we are fixed on it. For my part, when I can exercise a grace, or perform a duty, that is debased by no imperfection, mingled with no corruption, then I will trust on self-righteousness. But till then, I must be very unreasonable, if I do not rely on my illustrious surety; fly to the ark of his wounds, and make mention of his righteousness only. This is all-sufficient; and never, never faileth those, that trust in it.

You are not ignorant of my sentiments, with regard to our dissenting brethren. Are we not all devoted to the same supreme Lord? Do we not all rely on the merits of the same glorious Redeemer? By professing the same faith, the same doctrine which is according to Godliness, we are incorporated into the same mystical body. And how strange, how unnatural would it be, if the head should be averse to the breast, or the hands inveterately prejudiced against the feet, only because the one is habited somewhat differently from the others? Though I am steady in my attachment to the established church, I would have a right hand of fellowship, and a heart of love, ever ready, ever open, for all the upright evangelical dissenters.—I thank you for the news you sent, it is impossible for me to say you in kind.—Make my most respectful compliments acceptable to worthy Mr. * * *; I had agreed to wait upon him, when I was in town, but my brother's illness growing worse, and soon proving fatal, deprived me of this pleasure, and sent me home to attend his corpse with sorrow to the grave.—I hope, you will be pleased with archbishop Leighton's works; and I heartily pray, that they may be abundantly blessed to both our souls.—I sincerely commiserate poor Miss D. * * * case. Despair is indeed a fiery dart of the devil; but blessed be sovereign goodness, there is a remedy against this malady. The Israelites, though wounded by the deadly serpent, look to the brazen type hung upon the

pole, and found a certain cure. And though we are stung by a sense of guilt, and almost perishing in extreme despondency; yet let us turn our eye to him, who was lifted up on the cross, and we shall be whole. He, who was gashed with wounds, and covered with blood; was pierced with iron, and stabbed to the heart; he is our medicine, our recovery, our life. By his stripes we are healed. Oh! let us look unto him,—from the depths of distress, as well as from the ends of the earth, look unto him, and be saved.—My paper admonishes me to have done; but I cannot conclude, without assuring you, that I love you most affectionately,—so long as life and understanding last, shall pray for you among my choicest friends;—and hope, when this transitory scene of things is at an end, to be, in bonds of closer friendship, and tenderer endearment,

Ever, ever, your's &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LV.

Weston-Farrell, July 29, 1749.

My Dear Friend,

THANKS to my dear friend, for his welcome letter: it imparted joy to my heart; and having communicated pleasure to our family, is gone (part of it I mean) to make glad your children and your friends at Northampton.—I must confess, I never was so much disheartened at your disorder, as many others were, even, though the physicians themselves had given you over; and though I have been often accosted by some of your cordial well-wishers, with such saddening addresses; “I am sorry, Sir, to hear that

"Dr. Stanhouse is gone to Bristol, without any likelihood of returning alive."—I really believe, that God has some signal work for you to do. He, that has snatched the brand from the fire, and made it a polished shaft in his quiver, will not, I persuade myself, so soon cast it away, or break it to pieces. I have a strong presage, that almighty goodness will continue you, as an instrument to glorify his son Jesus Christ, and to turn many to righteousness, years and years after I am gone hence, and seen no more.—And I bless, together with you, his holy name, for confirming so far my apprehensions, as to begin the work of your recovery from so deplorable an illness. May he do in this case, as he will in the more important affair of our eternal salvation, though roughly accomplish what he has graciously begun!

Your family is in prosperity: your olive-plants thrive, and are glossy with health. I asked Sally, where her papa was, and how he did? And her pretty little lips liped, very bad, and gone to Bristol. Think, my friend, when you remember those sweet and engaging children,—think on that delightful promise in scripture; can a mother forget her sucking child? yea, she may forget, yet will not I forget thee. Isaiah xlix. 15.

From my heart I pity your sufferings: but if I pity your distress, with what infinitely more tender compassion are you regarded by your heavenly father! by him, who said in the multitude of his mercies,—“my son shall bleed, that you may be healed. My only son shall die, that you may live for evermore: may this blood thus shed for you preserve your body and soul to everlasting life.”—I hope you will be enabled to cast your burden upon the Lord, and resign yourself wholly to his wise disposal; and, doubtless, you will experience to your comfort, that he has the bowels of a father to commiserate, and the arm of omnipotence to succour.

A passage in the epistle to the Colossians, which I read this very day, (viz chap. ver. 11.) is extremely pertinent to your case, and what I shall frequently pray, may be fulfilled to your great consolation.—That you may be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all

patience, and long-suffering, with joyfulness.—If you should live to give me an hour's conversation, this verse, and the preceeding, would furnish us with a most pleasing and improving subject of discourse. The conciseness, the propriety, the energy of the inspired supplications, is admirable. But I must wave such remarks, lest I send you a preaching, instead of an epistle.

I heard you condemned the other day, in a large company, and indeed treated with a malignant severity, about an affair, in which, to my certain knowledge, you had acted with great generosity. I explained, to the confusion of the relator, all those circumstances, which he had so ly misrepresented; and then I quoted the remark of Mr. Richardson, in his *Clarissa*, viz. "That difficult situations (like yours) make seeming occasions of censure unavoidable; and that, where the reputation of another, (especially of a man of character) is concerned, we should never be in haste to censure, or to judge peremptorily on first surmises." *Audi alteram partem*, is always my rule. It is our duty to use circumspection; and to be upon our guard to cut off occasion from those, who seek occasion to misrepresent and injure us: after this precaution, we should not be too solicitous about the clamours of the malevolent, and the unthinking.—May the God of wisdom give us that prudence, which is profitable to direct! and then

Conscia mens recti famæ mendacia ridet

This was the Heathens cure for the wounds of defamation; this their armour against those keenest of arrows, bitter words. But see in this, as well as in every other instance, the noble superiority of the christian scheme! being defamed, we bless, says the Apostle. Pray for them that despitefully use us, says his divine master. This not only baffles, but more than triumphs over the efforts of malice; and brings an increase of virtue, consequently of happiness, even from the poison of malignity and the gall of misery.

The bishop has been at Northampton, and his charge turned upon the study of the scriptures; which he affecti-

onately recommended, and forcibly urged. There was something omitted, which I could not but wish had been represented, and enforced. However, in the main, it was excellent, and what I should rejoice to have reduced to universal practice. Our dear friend, Mr. * * *, spied the defect I hint at; and when his mealy-mouthed companion would not have concealed it, but rather have enlarged upon what was valuable,—"Truly, says he, I do not see, why we should not speak boldly; and bear our testimony, though it make the ears of the hearers to tingle." He is cut out for a champion in the cause of our blessed Lord; very sensible, and man of the gentleman; bold too as a lion, he breathes defiance against the world and hell. Confiding in his Almighty Master, he fears neither the scourge of the tongue, nor the pomp of power.

Please to present my affectionate compliments to Mr. C. and to Mr. G * * *. I need not solicit a place in their or your daily intercessions, because I am persuaded neither of you can withhold so needful a piece of charity. Accept my best wishes, to which I join my earnest prayers, for your health, your comfort, and happiness, and believe me, as I am, my dear Doctor,

Your sincere friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LVI.

Weston-Farell, Aug. 30, 1749

My Dear Friend,

WE have seen marvellous things to day, said the people of old; and I may truly say, I have read mar-

vellous tidings this evening. What ! is * * become a serious and zealous preacher ? He that so often filled the scorner's chair, is he transformed into a strenuous advocate for the gospel, and a devoted champion of Christ ? Never, surely, was the Prophet's exclamation more seasonable, grace ! grace ! *Zech. iv. 7.* How sovereign is power ! how superabundant its riches !

I heartily congratulate you, my dear friend, my very dear brother I must call you now, on this change. And I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, that he hath counted you faithful, putting you into the ministry.—I think the hand of providence, in conducting this affair, is very visible, and much to be regarded. Which must give you no small satisfaction, and tend to work, not the spirit of fear, but of love, and of faith, and of a sound mind.

How honorable is your new office ! to be an envoy from the king of heaven !—How delightful your province ! To be continually conversant in the glorious truths of the gospel, and the unsearchable riches of Christ !—How truly gainful your business ! To win souls : this is indeed—an everlasting possession.—And how illustrious the reward, promised to your faithful service ! When the chief shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away.

May we clearly discern, and never forget, what a master we serve !—So glorious, that all the angels of light adore him :—So gracious, that he spilt his blood, even for his enemies :—So mighty, that he has all power in heaven and on earth :—So faithful, that heaven and earth may pass away, much sooner than one jot or tittle of his word fail. And what is his word, what his engagement to his ministers ? **LO I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS.** I write it in capitals, because I wish, it may be written in our hearts.—Go forth my dear friend, in the strength of this word ; and, verily, you shall not be confounded. Plead with your great Lord, plead for the accomplishment of this word, and the gospel shall prosper in your hand. In every exercise of your ministerial duty, act on humble faith, on this wonderful word, and the heart of stone shall feel, the powers of hell

fall.—Would to God I had health and strength, I would earnestly pray for grace, that I might join, vigorously join, in this good warfare. But you know, I am like a bleeding disabled soldier, and only not slain. I hope, however, I shall rejoice to see my comrades routing the foe, and reaping their laurels. Rejoice to see them go on, conquering and to conquer; though no longer able to share, either in toils or the triumphs of the day.

I believe, it will be no very easy matter to procure a cure, such as you will like; no such offers to my observation.—I heartily wish your valuable friend Mr. * * *, that faith in the all-atoning blood of the lamb, and that comfort in the communications of his spirit, which may sweetly out-balance the weight of any sorrow, and enable him to rejoice in tribulation!

Remember, now you are a minister of God, that your tongue is to be a well of life: You are to believe in Christ, daily to cherish your faith in Jesus, that out of your heart may flow rivers of living waters. Such tidings of heavenly and healing truths, as may refresh the fainting soul, and animate its feeble graces.

Please to present my affectionate compliments to Mr. C.—, and Mrs. S.—; engage their prayers to the Father of compassions in my behalf; and when you yourself draw near to the throne, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, fail not to remember,

* I am, dear Sir,

Most affectionate Friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LVII.

Weston-Favell, Sat. Evening.

My Dear Friend,

THIS morning I received your parcel, with a ticket full of the affection of your heart, and sprightliness of your temper.—My health languishes, but it is a singular mercy that it is not tortured away by racking pains.—I would do any thing to repair my constitution, and prolong my life; that if it should please the divine providence to renew my strength, I might devote it wholly to his service, and be less unprofitable in my generation. But from what I feel, and yet cannot describe, I have no expectation of this kind.

I am highly delighted with Witsius, *De Oeconomica Fœderum*; he is an author exactly suited to my taste; so perspicuous, so elegant, so orthodox.—I wish such a treasure had fallen into my hands, when I studied at the University.

I like Mr. —'s spirit, only wish it was a little more evangelical. Let us so act our parts, as, &c. Might not Tully have said the same? Has not Seneca said as much? Why should not Christ Jesus be the foundation of our hopes? Is it less rational, less comfortable, to say with St. Paul, "He that not spared not his own son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also, freely give us all things?"

I heartily pity our *Staffordshire* friend.—Cheer him, speak comfortably to him, let not the consideration of his circumstances increase the depression of his spirits. We will never abandon him, nor suffer him to want so long as we

have any thing ourselves.—I said, we will not abandon :— but how poor and cold the consolation, arising from this succour! what are we? Impotence, misery, sin! I believe he loves the Lord Jesus, flies for refuge to the hope set before him *, in the everlasting righteousness, and perfect atonement of Christ. He may, therefore, boldly say, and apply to himself those glorious promises; “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me †,” Present my tender and affectionate compliments to him.

I am glad you have invited to your house, that eminent friend of God—and dear friend of your’s, the Rev. Mr. * * * (for such I know he is.)—Thus doing, you are in the fashion; for it is a reigning maxim at court, (the court of the blessed and only potentate the king of kings, and Lord of Lords,) “be not forgetful to entertain *strangers*.”—And can there be a more worthy stranger? Let the elders that rule well, be courted worthy of double honor, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.—You know who it is that says of his faithful ministers, “he, that receiveth you, receiveth me.” Gracious and adored Redeemer! shall we not receive thee into our houses, who, for our sakes, hadst not where to lay thy blessed head! wast an exile in *Egypt*, a prisoner at the bar; a corpse in the grave!—pray for me, dear friend, that I may bow my poor head in dutiful resignation to the divine will; that I may bless the hand, and kiss the rod that chastises; and love the Lord, who takes away the strength of my body, but has given me the blood of his son. I beseech Mr. * * * to unite his supplication with your’s; for I am fearful, lest I should disgrace the gospel in my languishing moments.

Upon a repeated review of the hints you have wrote to promote the cause of religion, I do not see how to improve them; only exercise your talent; stir up the gift of God by a zealous use, and you yourself will be the best improver of such hints. Oh! let us work while the day lasts; the

* Heb. vi. 18.

† Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

judge is at the door, and eternity at hand. May we watch, and pray always, that we may be found worthy to stand before the son of man at his coming.

I am ever,

and most affectionately your's,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LVIII.

Weston-Favell, July 23, 1749.

Dear Sir,

THE favour you have done me, in presenting me with Mr. *Moses Broome's* works, was far from my expectation. Please to accept my best thanks for the gift which, I dare say, will, in the perusal, prove perfectly agreeable, and not a little useful.

I hope the divine providence will give his *Sunday Thoughts* an extensive spread, and make them an instrument of diffusing the Saviour of true religion. Seldom, if ever, have I seen a Treatise, which presents the reader with so full, yet concise a view; so agreeable, yet striking a picture of true christianity in its most important articles, and most distinguishing peculiarities. Though I am utterly unacquainted with the author, I assure myself he is no novice in the sacred school, and has more than a speculative knowledge of the gospel; every page discovers traces of an excellent heart, that has itself experienced what the muse sings.

I am, &c.

JAMES HERVEY

LETTER LIX.

My Dear Friend,

I AM quite ashamed to be found so dilatory in acknowledging your welcome letter; made doubly valuable, by bringing with it the judicious observation of Mr. † † †.—Your late favour has hinted a consideration, which will always pass for some excuse with my compassionate friends; and which, so long as this earthly tabernacle is upheld from falling into the dust, I shall always have to alledge: I mean, a very languid and disordered state of body. And as I number you amongst my truly compassionate friends, I look upon myself to be acquitted, as soon as arraigned.

I entirely agree with Mr. —, in his remarks on my Lord Bishop's well-meant and pathetic letter. It is pity, and it is strange, that, in an earnest exhortation to repentance, no regard should be had to Christ Jesus. Is it not his gift to impotent sinners, who is exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins? — Is not his precious but bitter passion, the exciting cause of evangelical repentance; according to the testimony of the prophet, "they shall look on him, whom they have pierced, and mourn:"—And can our poor imperfect repentance find favour in the sight of the Lord, unless it be accepted in the beloved?

I am as much pleased with that ingenious writer's observations on my own little volumes. Let the righteous smile me friendly, and reprove me. With thankfulness I shall receive, with readiness submit to correction.—I am very far from thinking Mr. — a sour critic. On the contrary, I admire his candour, in transmitting the mistakes to the author himself, and not trumpeting them abroad to the discredit of the work. I have so high an opinion of his judgment, that if the father of lights should enable me to finish

the small piece I am attempting, I should be extremely glad to have every sheet pass under the correction of so wise and penetrating an observer.

To call *Sisera's* mother a *Midianitish* lady, is a most undoubted and palpable blunder. If the divine providence pleases to give another edition to the book, it shall certainly be altered.

As to the frontispiece, there was great doubt, whether I should have any at all. It was first drawn with a direct crucifix; such as it represented in the Romish churches, and almost idolized, I mean, by the christians of that communion. For this reason the decoration, though sketched out by my very obliging draughtsman, was wholly omitted in the second edition. Then it was suggested, that a piece of machinery might succeed; be equally expressive, and yet unexceptionable; which is the import of the present figure; our Lord, not portrayed in the window, nor exhibited in imagery, but rising from the spot, or miraculously appearing in the place.

With regard to my calling those persons, who took up arms against King Charles I. Rebels; you know it is the avowed tenet of the church of England, and the declared sense of our legislators. If I was to alter that expression, especially since it has stood so long, it might probably disgust readers, who are in a contrary way of thinking; at least it would give occasion for speculation, and stir up the embers of mutual animosity, which, I hope, are now sleeping, and upon the point of being extinguished. For my part, I look upon King Charles as one of the best men, that ever filled a throne; and esteem the Puritans as some of the most zealous christians, that ever appeared in our land. Instead of inveighing against either, I would lament the misfortune of both; that, through some deplorable mismanagement, they knew one another no better, and valued one another no more. Otherwise, how happy might they have been! they in so devout a sovereign; he, in such conscientious subjects.

Washing away sins by baptism, is a scriptural expression: and now says Ananias to the converted persecutor, "why

"tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Where, I suppose, washing with water, which is the sign, is put for the application of the Lamb's blood, which is the blessing signed.—This, I apprehend, extends to native impurity, as well as committed iniquity, since they both render us children of wrath. Not that it implies an extirpation of original corruption, but refers to its condemning power; which is done away, when the atoning merits of Christ's death are applied and sealed to the soul.—Upon the whole, I think the expression is justifiable. Yet, if Mr. * * * 's remonstrance had come sooner, it should have been more explicit in its meaning, and more guarded from possibility of mistake. And was I called upon to explain my sentiments, I should take leave to borrow Mr. * * * 's words.

Please to present my most affectionate compliments to him; and let him know, I acknowledge myself obliged to him, for his valuable remarks; and shall be still more obliged, if he pleases sometimes to remember me in his effectual fervent prayers, that I may, though weak in body, be strong in faith; giving glory, to God our Saviour.—I hope, he intends to publish his *Discourses upon the Christian Sabbath*. I think, such a Treatise is not a little wanted. I have seen nothing upon the subject, that has given me satisfaction.

Transmit my most cordial affection to good Mr. * * *, I dearly love him, and rejoice in the expectation of meeting him, in the everlasting kingdom of our glorious Redeemer. How considerable, what a perfect nothing, is the difference of preaching in a cloak, or in a gown, since we both hold the head, both are united to the same Saviour, and hath access by the same spirit to the father. I assure him his name has been constantly mentioned in my poor intercessions, ever since he favoured me with his friendly and edifying letter. Tell him I am making some faint attempts to recommend to the world a doctrine, which is music to his ears, and better than a cordial to his heart: the righteousness of Immanuel, freely imputed to wretched

sinner, for their complete justification, and everlasting acceptance. I would also represent, in an amiable and endearing light, that other precious privilege of the gospel, sanctification of our hearts, and newness of life, through the power of the blessed spirit; and give, if the Lord should enable, a pleasing picture of death, stripped of his horrors, and appearing as an usher, commissioned by the court of heaven, to introduce us before the prince of the kings of the earth. Beseech my worthy friend to assist me with his prayers, to the father of mercies, and fountain of light, that if I write, it may not be I, but the spirit of the Lord Jesus, that writeth by me, enabling blindness itself to find out acceptable words, and to hit the avenues of pleasure and conviction.

I am glad to hear that the second part of *Sunday Thoughts* is come abroad. Pray do not fail to let Mr. Rivington have six setts for me before *Thursday* morning; because he has another parcel to transmit to me this week, in which those may with convenience be enclosed.—You have paid me an obliging compliment; beg of the blessed God, dear Sir, that I may not be puffed up with vain conceit of myself or my writings. Oh! that earth and ashes, that guilt and sin, should be proud! what so unreasonable? yet what so natural? May the Lord of glory rebuke this arrogant spirit; and teach my soul to be humble, to be evermore dependent on his aid, as a weaned child.

As to your entering into holy orders, I have no manner of doubt: by all means do it: it is what I have been praying for these several years; it is what all the disciples of Christ are directed to implore at the Lord's hand, that he would send many such labourers into his vineyard. As God has inclined your heart to the work; as he has given you so clear a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; and stirred you up to be zealous for the interests of a bleeding Saviour; I assure you, if the king would make me a bishop, one of the first acts of my episcopal office should be to ordain the author of *Sunday Thoughts*.—I hope the Lord will guide you with his spirit, will commission you to feed his flock, and make you a chosen instrument of bring-

ing many sinners to Christ, many sons unto glory.—Pray do not think your letters are troublesome; they are always pleasing, always cheering to,

Dear Sir,

Your most affectionate Friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LX.

My Dear Friend,

* MR. * * * sent me some time ago, your translation of *Zimmerman's excellency of the knowledge of Christ*. I was so engaged in urgent business, that I really had not leisure, and so oppressed with bodily weakness, that I had not ability, to undertake the office of comparing it with the original, I added my solicitation to your's, and pressed * * * to revise, and, if need be, correct the manuscript; and I would beg of you, my dear friend, not to be hasty in publishing. In this affair, I am for following the example of Fabius, *Cunctanda restituit rem*.

If I have not been punctual in answering your letter, ascribe it to the usual, which is indeed the true cause; I mean, to a failure of strength, and languor of spirits, which both disincline and disqualify me, for every thing. The winter has made me a prisoner. I have not been any farther than the church these two months. May you and all the ministers of the blessed Jesus, be anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power! may you, in imitation of our divine master, go about doing much spiritual good, and shedding abroad the Saviour of his most precious name:—Oh! that I had strength! I would then pray earnestly that I might go and do likewise.

Since it is represented, that I have engaged to preface the translation of *Zimmermannus de eminentid cognitionis christi*, I will not baulk the expectations of my valued friend, though I assure you I shall address myself to it with some trepidation: sensible that it will carry too assuming an air, and seeming as though, from being an obliged author, I should take upon me to act as dictator, and direct the public in their choice of books.

I am ever,

and most affectionately your's,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXI.

My Dear Friend,

I Received your letter; am sorry to hear you have been ill; heartily wish you a re-establishment of your health; and shall be glad, when it suits your inclination and conveniency, to see you at *Weston-Farrel*.

I am glad you are beginning to catechize your children. I hope you will be enabled to feed Christ's lambs, and dispense to them the milk of the word, as they may be able to bear it.—Indeed you apply to a wrong person for advice. I make some efforts it is true, to discharge, this duty, but not to my own satisfaction; and great will be the glory of divine grace, if it is to the edification of my people.—My time for catechizing is during the summer, when the days are long, and the weather is warm. But I think, you do right to conform to the usual custom of catechizing in Lent. My method is to ask easy questions, and teach the children very short and easy answers.—The Lord's prayer was

the last subject of our explanation.—In some such manner I proceeded:—Why is this prayer called the Lord's prayer? Because our Lord Jesus Christ taught it us.—Why is Christ called our Lord? Because he bought us with his blood.—Why does he teach us to call God father? That we may go to him, as children to a father.—How do children go to a father? With faith, not doubting but he will give them what they want.—Why our father in heaven? That we may pray to him with reverence.—What is meant by God's name? God himself and all his perfections.—What by hallowed? That he may be honored and glorified.—How is God to be honored? In our hearts, with our tongues, and by our lives, &c. &c.

On each question I endeavour to comprehend, not all that may be said, but ~~that~~ only, which may be most level to their capacities, and is most necessary for them to know.—The answer to each question I explain in the most familiar manner possible; such a manner, as a polite hearer might perhaps treat with the most sovereign contempt. Little similes I use that are quite low, *etched non ex Academia, sed à Trivio*.—In every explanation I would be short, but repeat it again and again. Tautology, in this case, is the true propriety of speaking. And to our little auditors, the *Crambe repetita* will be better than all the graces of eloquence.

I propose to explain to them principally the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the commandments: what relates to the two sacraments, at present, I do not attempt to set before them: let them first have some tolerable notion of the former.—I fancy, you had better proceed in the same method. If I know your sentiments about baptism aright, with which our catechism begins, I should apprehend, it would be most prudent to go immediately to the great fundamentals.—However, pray to the Lord, whose work you work; and he who is all-wise will direct you, he who is all powerful will prosper you.—Pray give my very affectionate compliments to †††: through the everlasting righteousness of our Redeemer, I hope to meet them in the world of glory; and there, he that is feeble, will be as David.

Your's, &c.

LETTER LXII.

Weston-Favell, May 27, 1750.

Dear Sister,

THE country is now in its perfection. Every bush a nosegay, all the ground a piece of embroidery; on each tree the voice of melody, in every grove a concert of warbling music. The air is enriched with native perfumes, and the whole creation seems to smile. Such a pleasing, improving change has taken place; because, as the Psalmist expresses it, God has sent forth his spirit, and renewed the face of the earth.—Such a refining change takes place in mankind, when God is pleased to send his holy spirit into the heart. Let us therefore humbly, and earnestly seek the influences of this divine spirit. All our sufficiency is from this divine spirit, dwelling in our hearts, and working in us both to will, and to do. Without his aids, we are nothing, we have nothing, we can do nothing.—Would we believe in Christ, to the saving of our souls? We must receive power from on high, and be enabled by this divine spirit; for no man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, or exercise true faith on his merits, but by the holy ghost?—Would we be made like unto Christ? It can be done only by this divine spirit. We are transformed into the same image, says the apostle, not by any ability of our own, but by the spirit of the Lord.—Would we be set on the right hand of our judge at the last day? This is the mark that will distinguish us from the reprobates, and number us with his faithful people. For unless a man, unless a woman, have the spirit of Christ, they are none of his.—But, since we infinitely need this enlightening and sanctifying spirit, is the God of heaven equally willing to give it? He is; indeed he is. To obtain this gift for us sinners, his own son bled to death on the cross. That we may be made parta-

kers of this gift, he intercedeth at the right hand of his father: and he has passed his word, he has given us a solemn promise, that if we ask we shall receive it. See, remember, and often plead in prayer, Luke xi. 13. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the holy spirit to them, who ask him?

From your affectionate Brother, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXIII.

June 28, 1750.

My Dear Friend,

IF you chide, I must accuse. Pray where was your warrant, where your commission, to impress me into this journey? However, as becomes a good christian, I forgive you and your accomplice † † †.

At *St. Alban's* I was weary, and dispirited; was loth could not prevail on myself to desire Doctor Cotton's company at the Inn, and was not able to crawl to his house. Believe me, I sincerely honor, and cordially love, the worthy Doctor. Though I am naturally shy, I should want no solicitations to wait on so very ingenious and improving a friend; a pleasure I promise myself, if providence brings me back alive.—We got to London about three o'clock on Saturday. I took up my lodgings, not at my brother's after the flesh, but with the brother of my heart. On Sunday he preached with his usual fervour, and administered the sacrament to a great number of very serious communicants.



He delights in the work of the ministry, and embraces every opportunity of preaching the everlasting gospel. He is, indeed, in labours more abundant. Dear Sir, what a pattern of zeal, and ministerial fidelity, is our excellent friend! and God rewards him with joy unspeakable. God also fulfils to him, in a remarkable manner, his gracious promise, "they that honor me, I will honor." This day he was most respectfully entertained at the houses of two noblemen. What a most exalted satisfaction must he enjoy in attending these great personages, not to engage for favours, but to lay up for them an everlasting obligation; not to ask their interests at court, but to be the minister of their reconciliation to the King of kings!—Thus far was wrote on Sunday night; I was hindered from finishing soon enough for the rest.—Monday morning.—Yesterday our indefatigable friend renewed his labour of love, and with such assiduity, that I had not spirits to attend, what he had strength to execute. He preached to a crowded audience, and yet multitudes went away for want of room. In the midst of this audience, was a clergyman in his canonical dress; a stranger: his name I could not learn; he behaved with exemplary seriousness, and expressed much satisfaction.—One day last week I was most agreeably surprized. Drinking tea at a friend's house, a person knocked at the door: the servant brought word that it was a stranger, who desired to speak with Mr. Hervey. And who do you think it was? One whom I tenderly love, but never expected to see again: it was the accomplished and amiable Mr. * * *. We took sweet counsel together at Gaius mine host's, and wished one another a happy meeting in the world of glory.—My fellow-traveller saw your letter, and bid me tell you, that if you are chained to the bar, the chains are of your own making.—Dear Sir, preach the glorious gospel. Be an ambassador for the most high God, Devote yourself to this most important, most noble service, and your divine master, I hope, will furnish you with employ, and open a door for your usefulness. The fruit of such labours will abide, and our friend is a proof, in what peace, in what joy, they are sown.—My animal nature is

so very, very feeble, that I find no benefit from the change of air, nor from the enjoyment of the most pleasing society.

Ever, your's &c.

LETTER LXIV.

London, Sept. 4, 1750

Dear Sir.

OUR dear friend * * is much engaged in making interest to succeed the minister of † †, who, though not stone dead, is ill enough to alarm the hopes of neighbouring preachers. Oh! that we may every one contend who shall bring most glory to the crucified king of heaven, and love most ardently his all-gracious and infinitely amiable majesty! a strife this, which will not foment, but destroy malignant passions; in which strife, angels will be our competitors; honor and joy, the everlasting prize.

I wish our friend H—the rich anointings of God's spirit in composing, and the powerful presence of God's spirit in delivering, his infirmity sermon. My most cordial love is ever his, and ever your's.

Thank you I do sincerely, for your prayers to God in my behalf; and oh! how shall I thank sufficiently him, who procured access for us through his blood! we often remember you, and wish and pray, that you may be a burning and a shining light in your generation.

Dear friend, adieu.

N N

LETTER LXV.

Sept. 11, 1750.

My Dear Friend,

I received your last favour. It was without date, but very welcome.—We have lost our zealous friend, for several days. He has been displaying the banner of the gospel at † †, and gathering together the dispersed of Israel. We admire the hero that wins battles, takes towns, and leaves trophies of his victories in every place. But where will all such toils, and the very remembrance of them be, when the monuments of his labours endure for ever in heaven?

Thanks for your subscription: I have procured more of another friend. I shall soon be a poor man, as there are here so many necessitous objects. And who can bear to be in affluence, while so many fellow-creatures are in deplorable want? Especially, if we remember him, who, though he was rich, for our sake became poor; and had not where, (Oh! marvellous, marvellous abasement!) had not where to lay his head.

This night dear Mr. † † is with us; returned from his expedition, full of life, and rich with spoils: spoils won from the kingdom of darkness, and consecrated to the captain of our salvation. I have been prevailed on to sit for my picture. If every portrait was the shadow of a shadow, mine is such. Oh! that it may be renewed after the amiable image of the blessed Jesus, and when I awake up after his likeness, I shall be satisfied with it! this wish is breathed in a language, to me unusual. I generally comprehend my dear friend in such petitions, and make his eternal interests inseparable from my own.—On Sunday I heard the admired Mr. † †. His text was Rom. v. 1. His doctrine evangelical. The faith which purifies the heart, and works

by love; the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, comprehending both his active and passive obedience; the operation of the blessed spirit, in producing this sound and lively faith; were the substance of his discourse.—I commit you, my dear friend, to the tender mercies of our God, and the powerful word of his grace; remaining

Your's &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXVI.

London, October 23, 1730

My Dear Friend,

AS your stay in town was so short, we could not expect to see you. On Sunday afternoon your old acquaintance Mr. † † called upon me, sat about an hour, enquired after you, and talked as became the christian character, and the sacred day. The conversation was perfectly pleasing; but the subjects, whether we were led to them by chance, or directed to them by providence, were peculiarly noble and important. I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c. Job xix. Behold my servant shall deal prudently, &c. Isa. lii.—We expect to see our dear friend, † †, in a little time. • Oh! that we may meet each other, and daily converse in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of peace! —I say no more about poor Mrs. † †; perhaps, my concern for her, may be uncommonly tender, because there have few days past, since I knew her, in which I have not made mention of her name, in my prayers for the afflicted. —May the God of wisdom teach you, and the God of power enable you, to do always such things as are acceptable

in his sight through Jesus Christ! and may the father of compassions make her sorrows bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and issue in everlasting joy!—I hope, the truly valuable Dr. * * and his family, took knowledge of you, that you had been with Christ. Let us study, let us labour, to spread abroad the Saviour of his blessed name; who suffered the vengeance due to all—to all our sins.—That his presence may be with you, and his love be in you, is the invariable wish, of

Your sincere friend, &c

LETTER LXVII.

London, Nov. 15, 1750.

My Dear Friend,

I Have communicated your two messages to * * : he is now with his old acquaintance at * *. On *Sunday* he preached morning and afternoon at L * * church. May his word prove a seed of life and immortality to the hearers. On *Tuesday* he and Mr. * * breakfasted with us: the talk turned principally upon the mystic writers. Dr. * * began to warm a little, to hear Mr. † † inveigh pretty sharply against them. But by giving a soft answer, and making considerable concessions in their behalf, Mr. † † cooled, and qualified all. He spoke with remarkable command of temper, and, I think, with great solidity of judgment. I wish it may lessen our valuable friend H—'s attachment to those authors; which, I believe, is immoderate, and, I fear, is pernicious.—I heartily wish your children may recover, and live to be a comfort to their father, an honor to their religion.—I have received Dr. D—'s remarks; very judicious, and equally faithful. I scarce know any friend, who

has so true a taste, and so much sincerity. *Fict. Aristarchus*, is the character he deserves.

Yesterday a serious dissenter from the country came to see me. God had freed him from a spirit of bigotry, and made my book acceptable to him. Oh! that we may all love one another, and bear with one another; to fulfil the law, and follow the example of Christ. In the New Jerusalem, that city of the living God, all our little differences of opinion, as well as all the remainders of corruption, will fall off. In the light of God's countenance, we shall see the truth clearly, and enjoy the life, the life of heaven and eternity, perfectly. Oh! that we may love that amiable and adorable being every day, every hour more and more; who, though the king immortal, and invisible, gave his own son to bleed and die for worms, for rebels; for you, my dear friend, and for your unworthy, but

Truly affectionate, &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

November 20, 1750.

My dear Friend,

PRESENT my very grateful acknowledgments to our obliging friend Mr. * *. I rejoice in his letters, as they are a pledge of his affection and friendship; but I really am under apprehensions from them, as they are to be a public encomium on my character, lest they should make me think more highly of myself than I ought to think. Oh! may the high and lofty one, who inhabits eternity, and dwells with the humble heart, vouchsafe to defend me from all the insinuations of pride. To be sure, that is a trying

occasion ; for *laudari a laudatis*, is no common honor.—I would beg leave to postpone the publication of the verses, till the Mezzotinto plate is finished, and the print ready to be sold. Because, if such a recommendation appears at such a juncture, I am persuaded, it will cause a demand for the picture, and further its sale. Good heavens ! who would ever have thought, that so mean a name, and so obscure a person, should appear in the world with such an air of significancy ? Oh ! that it may be for the glory of that ever blessed and adorable being, who manifests his transcendent excellency most chiefly in shewing merey.—When you heard of Mr. * *'s death, did you not immediately think of the prophet's declaration ? “ *All flesh is grass, and all the godliness thereof, as the flower of the field.* ” Did you not also ardently desire, and resolve to seek for, an assured interest in the promises of that word, which endureth for ever ? May the God of grace seal those promises to our hearts, by his blessed spirit ; and witness with our spirits, that we are the objects of his love, and heirs of his kingdom ! then we may defy death, and boldly bid the king of terrors do his worst.—Mr. † † is making an excursion to —, and——. May the Lord God of hosts go forth with his servant, and make him terrible to the infernal enemy, as an army with banners ; welcome to poor sinners, as the refreshing dews after parching heat.—How my soul longs to be employed in the same sacred, blessed cause ! does, not your's also throb with the same desires ?—I can no more. Supper waits for me. Adieu. All spiritual blessings be multiplied upon

You, and ever your's, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXIX.

December 8, 1750.

My dear Friend,

WHY do you say *Simmeram's* knowledge of *Christ* is too comfortable for you? The comfort of christianity is the sweet allurements to draw us to heaven, and the powerful instrument to fit us for heaven. If our affections are attached to the world, the comfort of christianity is ordained, to wean us from its vanities, and win us to God. If we have sinned, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ is the most sovereign means of wounding our hearts and bringing us to repentance. When Nathan said unto David, "The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die," then it is supposed he penned the thirty second psalm, and poured out his soul in unreserved confession. When the blessed Jesus turned, and looked upon Peter, then his conscience smote him deep, then he went out, and wept bitterly. And how did his dear master look? Was it a resentful, upbraiding, menacing glance? Quite the reverse. Is this your promised fidelity? this your kindness for your friend? Ah! *Peter! Peter!* I feel more from your perfidy, than from all the insults of my enemies. But I know your weakness, and I am going to die for your guilt. Willingly, willingly, I lay down my life, that this sin may never be laid to your charge. Such was the language of that gracious look. I do not wonder that it fetched a flood of tears from his eyes. I find it impossible to refrain, on the bare meditation on it. Oh! that the adorable Redeemer may manifest his all forgiving goodness in our souls, and sure it will overcome our most stubborn corruptions. What can withstand such heavenly love?—I know * *, and think you have a peculiar privilege in having opportunity and

ability to succour so sincere a christian. He will more than repay you with his prayers. Whatsoever you do for him, I am persuaded, will be done unto Christ. And who can do enough for him, who despised the shame, and endured the cross for us?—Your writing paper came safe, and I would have returned it to the stationer as too coarse, but has, since its arrival, been seized; seized in the king's name, by one of the king's officers. Pray, have you taken care to pay duty? Have you not been deficient in some instance or other? Oh! said *Gaius* my host, when he heard of its coming back, it is good enough for me; it will just suit my purpose; I wanted such a supply:—So it is in his hands, to be employed in the service of a great king; whose name you can guess; whose goodness you have experienced; and for whose honor, I hope we shall all be very zealous. What say you? Will you turn the forfeiture into a free gift, by sending your full consent to the deed?—Our dear friend has been visited with a fever; attended by the doctor every day this week: but, blessed be God, is, we trust, upon the eve of a thorough recovery. He talks of preaching to-morrow; but I shall use my utmost interest to dissuade him. Let him desist for a-while, that he may persist for a long season.—We have but a small share of † †'s company. Oh! that we may meet where we shall part no more, sin no more.—Adieu!

Ever your's &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXX.

Dec. 20, 1750.

My very dear Friend,

YOUR letter found me, after a considerable delay in its passage,—where do you think? Where I never expected to go any more;—found me at *London*! from whence I write this, and return you my sincerest thanks.—Prevailed on by the repeated importunity of my friends, I came by easy stages to town, in order to try whether change of air may be of any service to my decayed constitution; for my worthy physician, Dr. *Stonhouse* has declared, that nothing, which he can prescribe, is likely to administer any relief.

I have reason to be convinced, from the accounts which your letter brings, and from the reports which I receive in this place, that “*here we have no continuing city*” Thanks, everlasting thanks to the divine goodness, which has prepared for us a mansion, “not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” A mansion, “whose builder, whose maker, and whose glory is God.”—Not only the disappointment, but even the acquisition of our desires, bespeaks the emptiness of the world. But what a compleat felicity, what an all satisfying portion, will the enjoyment of God be! when I awake up after thy likeness, (and am admitted to stand in thy beatific presence) I shall be satisfied with it.

I pitied, as I read, poor Miss *’s case. There cannot be a keener distress, than a conscience, that is awakened, and a heart, that depends. “The spirit of a man, says Solomon, will sustain his other infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?” A wounded spirit was the bitter.

est ingredient, even in the cup of our Lord's exquisitely severe sufferings. He that bore the racking tortures of crucifixion, without a complaint, cried lamentably, wept blood, when the arrows of the almighty were within him. Then his soul was sorrowful, sorrowful even unto death. This dejection of our adored master should be our consolation; his agonies are our ease; he was deeply sorrowful, that we might be always rejoicing. To believe, that he was wounded for our sins, and bruised for our iniquities; that he was destitute, afflicted, tormented for our sake, that by his vicarious, and most meritorious obedience unto death, he has obtained everlasting redemption for us,—firmly to believe this, is not arrogance, is not presumption, but our bounden duty, as well as our inestimable privilege. This is his command, says *St John*, that we believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ. Never, never was any command more gracious, or more worthy to be written on the tables of our hearts. Let us not, my dear Mr. * *, by indulging unbelief—O! let us not dishonor the boundless mercy, and the inviolable fidelity of God; let us not depreciate the infinite merits, and all prevailing intercession of our blessed mediator. But say with the lively poet, *Dr. Watts*, in his hymns,

O! for a strong, a lasting faith,
To credit what th' Almighty saith!
'T' embrace the promise of his son,
And call the joys of heav'n our own!

HYMN LX. Book II.

You enquire about my new work, intended for the press. It is a great uncertainty, whether my languid spirits, and enfeebled constitution, will permit me to execute my design. It is a pleasure, however, to hear, that I am sometimes admitted to converse with you by my book. May the divine spirit accompany every such conversation; and teach our souls to glow with gratitude to that transcendently great and gracious being, who stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth; who stretched out

his arms on the cursed tree, and laid the foundation of our happiness in his own blood.—Please to present my most respectful compliments to Mrs. † †, and his nieces. Give me leave, instead of wishing you a merry *Christmas*, to wish them, and you all that joy, which the holy prophet felt, when, in an extasy of delight, he cried out, to us a child is born! to us a son is given! all the glories of heaven unite in his wonderful person; all the blessings of time and eternity are the fruit of his precious incarnation.—Adieu, my dear Sir, and cease not to pray for

Your most affectionate Friend, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXXI.

London, Dec. 22, 1750.

My dear Friend,

BE so kind as to let your servant look out for some person of *Collingtree*, and deliver to him the enclosed letter. He will probably find some such person on *Monday* at † †, and I would have the letter conveyed by *Christmas*, that it may furnish my people with matter for conversation at their hospitable meetings.—Our excellent friend follows the advice of the preacher; whatsoever, of a charitable, or godly nature, his hand findeth to do, he does it with his might; as one deeply convinced that there is no wisdom or device in the grave, whither we all are hasting. Does not so amiable a person, such an indefatigable servant of Christ; such a compassionate friend to mankind, does not he deserve encouragement?

We have just been to hear a very excellent discourse upon Zech. iv. 7. Mr. * *, who made one of the congre-

gation, sends his compliments to you, and to Dr. ††, which when you present, be pleased to add mine.—Who do you think I lately drank tea with? The two ladies, before whom you put me so extremely to the blush. May neither they nor I be put to everlasting shame and confusion: I did what was in my power to prevent it, by recommending that adorable Saviour to their affections, in whom, whosoever believeth shall not be ashamed. They commissioned me to transmit their compliments to you.—You have thanks and prayers (the reward which a prophet gives) for the writing-paper.—What account can you give us of Lady ††'s health? Never, never, would the physician's skill be employed for the lengthening of a more valuable life. May almighty goodness bless those prescriptions, and command her constitution, and our zeal to sprout out afresh, to revive.

Ever, your's &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXXII.

December 29, 1750.

My dear Friend,

THIS time last week, I took pen in hand to beg; now I should be ungrateful, if I did not resume it, in order to return my thanks, which I do most sincerely, in my own name, and on the behalf of my excellent host. He is now engaged in company, and cannot possibly steal a quarter of an hour to make his acknowledgments.—The limner has been with me twice, and is to give the finishing touches on Monday. How slowly, and how patiently,

these artists advance! a pattern for us. So may we have the image of the amiable Jesus gradually instamped on our hearts, till death gives the finishing stroke, and makes us completely like our beloved. In the mean time we have need of patience: patience must be exercised towards ourselves; and God, the blessed God, is unspeakably patient towards us all.—Mr. † † is willing to undertake the translation of *Zimmerman de Cognitione Christi*. I would have it thrown into the form of a dialogue:—why do you entertain such harsh thoughts of the dearest, most benign, and gracious of all beings? I can no more.

Ever your's &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXXIII.

Dear Sir,

I Return you thanks for the perusal of your pamphlets. Be pleased to accept the two little volumes, which accompany your other books, as an expression of my gratitude to your pen, and sincere affection to your person. May I request the favour of you, good Sir, sometimes to implore the blessing of a gracious God upon the author, and his weak attempts; that the one may walk suitably to his holy protection, and high calling; that the other may please the reader for its good to edification.—This will be a singular favour, and shall be readily returned by

Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

and humble servant. &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

*London Dec. 24, 1750.**Dear Mr. Nixon,*

I AM ashamed to see so obliging a letter, from so valuable a friend, lie so long unanswered. I delayed my grateful acknowledgments to you on this subject, till I could see what would be the issue of our design—As you propose to recommend my picture, by your ingenious verses, I should rather chuse to have them inserted (with your permission) in the magazine, and public papers, than to have them affixed to the copper plate:—this practice, though once customary, is now, I believe, seldom used; and for me to revive it, when it does me such distinguished credit, would be too vain-glorious; otherwise, I assure you, dear Sir, I should be glad to have a memorial of our friendship engraved on brass, or a more durable metal.—And give me leave to declare, that though I was exceedingly pleased with the character you gave of my book, in your excellent † anniversary sermon, yet I was much more delighted with your acknowledging me as your friend, and suffering it to be known, that I have a share in your affection.

I propose to make a long stay in town, and shall promise myself the pleasure of your company at my brother's.—Have you ever met with a little poem, entitled Sunday Thoughts? The author Mr. Moses Browne, is a very worthy man, and the poem not beneath your regard.—Shall I wish my worthy friend a merry Christmas? This compliment will be paid you by multitudes. Rather let me wish

† See the worthy and ingenious Mr. Nixon's sermon, preached before the governors of the Admiralty at New-Orleans.

that Christ Jesus, the ever blessed Immanuel, may be formed in both our hearts ! renewed after his amiable and divine image, may you see many revolving happy new years below, and at last have an abundant entrance into the new Jerusalem, which is above.—Breathing such wishes, I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your much obliged, and

very affectionate friend &c.

LETTER LXXV.

London, Feb. 5, 1751.

Dear Mrs —

I Received your valuable letter, and thank you for it.—I am exceeding glad, and bless the unspeakable goodness of God, if he has made my poor ministry, in any degree, serviceable, or comfortable to your soul. I accompany my former labours (if such extremely feeble attempts may be called labours) with my repeated prayers, and bear my little flock on my supplicating, and affectionate heart, all the day long. O! that the gracious God may fulfil in them all the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power !

I rejoice to find, that you know the truth : may you know it more and more ; be established in it, and experience the efficacy of it.—May the truth make you free ! free from the prevalence of unbelief, the dominion of sin, and the oppression of sorrow !—give, give—glory to God for opening the eyes of your mind, and bringing you to the riches of Christ. Take to yourself the comfort of this inestimable blessing,

and by no means reject your own mercy.—Pray do not harbour hard thoughts concerning the blessed God, nor cherish desponding apprehensions concerning yourself, though always frail, and in every respect imperfect.—The great and good father of our spirits, knows whereof we are made; he remembers that we are but dust; and will not be extreme to mark what is done amiss. Extreme to mark! so far from it, that to those who seek him in sincerity, seek him through his dear son, he is tender and compassionate beyond all imagination. As a father pitieth his own children, so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him, psal. ciii. 13. And as a mother comforteth her son, so will the Lord thy God comfort thee, Isai. lxvi. 13. Since we want loving kindness and mercy to follow us all the days of our life, blessed, for ever blessed, be the God of heaven, in these he delighteth, Jer. ix. 24.

Oh! cast thy burden upon the Lord, says the holy spirit. Cast it upon the Lord Jesus Christ. This is an art which the Christian should be diligent to learn, and watchful to practice. Christ is a Saviour, but we neglect to make use of him: we are come to him, but we forget to walk in him.—When guilt accuses us, or guilt overtakes us, instantly let us fly to Christ, as the *Israelites*, when wounded, looked to the brazen serpent. There, let us say, there is the propitiation for this abominable sin. For this, and for all my other iniquities, his heart was pierced, and his blood spilt. The vials of wrath, due to my provocations, were poured upon that spotless victim; and by his stripes I am healed.—If our own obedience is deplorably defective, so that we are sometimes ready to cry out with the prophet, my leanness! my leanness! woe is me; let us turn our thoughts to the great mediator's righteousness; this is consummate and divine; this was wrought out for us; this is imputed to us; in this all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and in this should they glory.—If your prayers are dull and languid, remember the intercession of Christ. He ever appears in the presence of God for you; and how can your cause miscarry, which has such an advocate? If the poor widow was heard, even by the unjust judge; shall not the

dearly beloved son of God prevail, when he makes intercession to a most gracious father? a father, who loves both him and his people. —If you want repentance, want faith, want holiness, Christ is exalted to be both a prince and a Saviour, and to give all these desirable blessings. He is ascended up on high, has led captivity captive, and received gifts, spiritual gifts for men, yea, even for his enemies, for the rebellious. It is his office to bestow these precious graces on poor sinners; and he is as ready to execute this office, as the mother is ready to administer the breast to a sucking child — Do you read the scriptures? Still keep Christ in view. When dreadful threatenings occur, say, these I deserved; but Christ has bore them in my stead. — When rich promises are made, say, of these I am unworthy; but my Redeemer's worthiness is my plea; he has purchased them for me by his merits. All the promises of God are yea and amen (sure and certain to the believing soul) in Christ Jesus.

- To make such a perpetual application of Christ, is to eat his flesh, and drink his blood. Thus may you, may I, may all my dear people, be enabled to pass the time of our sojourning here below! deriving our whole spiritual life, our pardon and sanctification, our hope, and our joy, from that inexhaustible fountain of all good. — Though I am not with you in person, I am often with you in spirit; and daily commit you to the great shepherd and bishop of souls; who is ten thousand, thousand times more condescending, compassionate and faithful than

Your most affectionate Friend, &c;

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXXVI.

Dear—,

I Received your kind letter; and am glad to find, that you and Mrs. * *, and Mrs. * *, often meet together, and like the people mentioned by the prophet, speak one to another of the things of God. Oh! let us exhort one another to faith, to love, and to good works; and so much the more, as we see the day, the day of eternal judgment approaching. Ere long we shall hear the shout of the archangel, and the trump of God. Oh! let us imitate the wise virgins, and get oil in our lamps, true grace in our hearts; that we may be prepared for our Lord's second coming, and not dread, but love his appearing.

My departure from *Northampton* was sudden and unexpected. Could I have seen my people, and given them my parting advice, it should have been in the words of that good man *Barnabas*, who exhorted all the disciples, that "with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."

Cleave, my dear friends, to the Lord Jesus Christ: cleave to his word; "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," and be your meditation all the day long. Let the bible, that inestimable book, be often in your hands, and its precious truths be ever in your thoughts. Thus let us sit, with holy *Mary*, at the feet of Jesus; and I hope, we shall experience his word to drop as the rain, and distill as the dew.

Cleave to his merits:—fly to his divine blood for pardon; it is the fountain opened for sin, and uncleanness. It purges from all guilt, takes away all sin; and, blessed be God, it is always open, always free of access.—Fly to his righteousness: let us renounce our own, and rely on his obedience. What unprofitable servants are we! how slothful in our whole life! how imperfect in every work!—but as for Christ, his work is perfect; it is complete, and infinitely

meritorious. In this shall all the seed of Israel, all true believers, be justified, and in this shall they glory.

Cleave to his spirit.—Seek for the divine spirit; cry mightily to God for the divine spirit. Let them, that have it, pray, that they may have it more abundantly, and be even filled with the spirit. This blessed spirit reveals Christ, strengthens faith, quickens love, and purifies the heart.—Christ died to obtain this spirit for us: he intercedes for us, that we may receive it; and his heavenly father for his sake, “has promised to give the holy spirit to “those, who ask “it.” He has promised (Oh! glorious privilege) to give it more readily than a parent gives bread to a hungry child.

‘Cleave to his example:—study his holy life; eye his unblameable conduct, observe his amiable tempers: look to this heavenly pattern, as those, that learn to write, look to their copy: and God grant, that we all beholding with open face the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even by the spirit of the Lord’

Thus let us cleave to Christ the Lord:—cleave with full purpose of heart, incessantly, closely, inseparably. Let us say with our father Jacob, “*I will not let thee go.*” Let us imitate the *Syrophœnician* woman, whom no discouragements could divert from her purpose. Temptations, difficulties, all the assaults of our enemy, should make us hasten to, the strong hold, the city of refuge, and abide in it. And he has promised, “*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*” He will gather us with his arm, and lay us in his bosom. He will guide us by his grace, and receive us into his glory.—There, in those happy, happy mansions, may we, and many, very many of my dear flock meet, and never be parted more!—this is the heart’s desire, and the daily prayer of,

Your much obliged, and

very affectionate friend &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER LXXVII.

Dear-

1751.

AND are you very weak! is sickness in the chamber, and death at the door?—Come then, let us both sit down with dissolution and eternity in view; and encourage one another from the word, the precious word of God. I have as much need of such consolation as you, my dear friend, and may, perhaps, have occasion to use them as soon.

What is there formidable in death, which our ever blessed Redeemer has not taken away?—Do the pangs of dissolution alarm us? Should they be sharp, they cannot be very long; and our exalted Lord, with whom are the issues of death, knows what dying agonies mean. He has said in the multitude of His tender mercies, “fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness,” (Isai. xli. 10.) This promise authorizes us to say boldly, “yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me.” Psal. xxiii. 4.

Are we afraid to enter into a strange, invisible, unknown world?—It is the world, into which our divine master is gone; where he has prepared everlasting mansions* for his people, and has appointed his angels to conduct us thither—Having such a convoy, what should we dread? And, going to our eternal home, where our all bountiful Redeemer is, why should we be reluctant?

* John xvi. 2.

Are we concerned, on account of what we leave? We leave the worse, to possess the better. If we leave our earthly friends, we shall find more loving and lovely companions. We shall be admitted among the innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and church of the first-born, that are written in heaven †.—Do we leave the ordinances of religion, which we have attended with great delight? leave the word of God, which has been sweeter to our souls, than honey to our mouths? We shall enter into the temple, not made with hands, and join that happy choir, who rest not day nor night, saying, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come ‡.—And if our bible is no more, we shall have all, which is promised; we shall behold all that is described therein. If we drop the map of our heavenly Canaan, it will be to take possession of its blissful territories. That city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof *.—Oh, my friend, blessed, for ever blessed, be the grace of our God, and the merits of his Christ! We shall exchange the scanty stream for the boundless ocean; and if we no longer pick the first ripe grapes, we shall gather the copious, the abounding, the never-ending vintage.

Do we fear the guilt of our innumerable sins?—Adored be the inexpressible loving kindness of God our Saviour! our sins have been punished in the blessed Jesus; the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all †. He his own self bare our sins, in his own body on the tree ‡. So that there is no condemnation to them, that are in Christ Jesus §. Oh! that we may be enabled, with the apostle, to make our boast of this Saviour, and to triumph in this faith! who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God

† Heb. xii. 22, 23.

‡ Rev. iv. 8.

* Rev. xxi. 23.

† 1st. Tim. ii. 6.

‡ 1. Pet. ii. 24.

§ Rom. viii. 1.

that justifieth, who is *he* that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea rather is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God ; who also maketh intercession for us.

Is judgment the thing that we fear?—To the pardoned sinner it has nothing terrible. The Lord Jesus who keeps his servants from falling, presents them also faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy *. Observe the comfortable expressions, “ *presents faultless,*”—and “ *with exceeding joy.*” Justly therefore does the Apostle reckon it among the privileges of the christians that they are come to God, the judge of all † : For the judge is our friend, the judge is our advocate, the judge is our propitiation, the judge is our righteousness. And is not a privilege to come to such a judge, as will not so much as mention our iniquities to us, but condescend to take notice of our poor unworthy services ; who sits on the great tribunal, not to pass the sentence of damnation upon us, but to give us a reward !—a reward of free grace, and of inconceivable richness.

Let me conclude with those charming words of the Prophet, “ Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. “ Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that “ her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ; for her Redeemer, her all gracious Redeemer, hath “ received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins ‡.”—May the God of our life and salvation make these scriptures be unto us, as a staff in the traveller’s hand, and as a cordial to the fainting heart, that we may be strong in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ ; that we may glory him in death, and glory him for death ; because death will introduce us into his immediate presence, where we shall be sorrowful no more ; but be joyful, and be like our Lord ; love him with all our soul, praise him to all eternity.—Let us then be of good cheer : Soon in our heavenly Jerusalem

* Jude, ver. 24. † Heb. xii. 13.

‡ Isai. xl. 1, 2.

we shall meet again ; because God is faithful, inviolably faithful, and infinitely merciful, who hath promised—promised to you, and promised to

Dear Sir,

*

Ever your's &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S My kindest respects to Mr. * *, and Mrs. * *. bid them be of good courage, and go on their way rejoicing ; for their Redeemer is mighty, his merits are unspeakable, and his love is unchangeable.—My most respectful compliments wait upon Mr. * *, and Mrs. * *. What a pleasure should I think it, was I able to execute the ministerial office, to bring home to their parlours the glad tidings of an all-sufficient Saviour, as well as to preach them in the pulpit !—*Polly*, I hope, loves her bible ; may the word of Christ dwell in her richly ; and may he be with your father and mother, now they are old and grey-headed.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Dear —

I Hope, this will find you a little better in your health ; but, if it should find you in a weak and languishing condition, I hope a gracious God will sanctify what it contrains, to the comfort of your soul.

Often consider, if you die, you will leave a world full of sin ; a condition, full of frailty, ignorance, and misery ; a body that has long been a heavy burthen, a sore clog, both to your services, and to your comforts ; and why should

any one be greatly unwilling to leave such a state?—If you die, you will go into an unknown world; but the comfort is, you have a kind and faithful friend gone thither before; Jesus Christ, your best friend, and the lover of your soul, is Lord of that unseen world. *Joseph's* brethren were not afraid to go down into *Egypt*, when they knew that their dear brother was governor of the country. And since your most merciful Saviour is ruler of the invisible world, be not afraid to leave the body, and depart thither. It is said, the spirit of old *Jacob* revived, when he saw the waggon sent to carry him to his beloved son: and the poor languishing believer may look upon death, as the waggon sent by Jesus Christ, to bring his soul home to heaven.

But after death comes judgment, and this is terrible.—Consider, who is the judge. Was the father, that begot you, was the mother, that bare you, or the friend, that is as your own soul, was any one of these to be the judge, and to pass the sentence, you would not be apprehensive of rigorous proceedings, you would expect all possible clemency: mercy, in this case, would rejoice against judgment.—But, to our unspeakable comfort, we are informed by the scriptures, that a glorious person, far more merciful than a father, far more compassionate than a mother, far more affectionate than a friend, is to decide our doom; even the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us with an everlasting love. Who declares, that a woman may forget her sucking child, much sooner than he forget to be merciful to those, that put their trust in him. For thus it is written, “God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man, whom he hath ordained, even “Jesus Christ.” Acts xvii. 31.

The judge calls himself our husband, the bridegroom of poor believing souls. And will the bridegroom deliver to destruction his own bride, whom he has bought with his blood, and with whom he has made an everlasting covenant? *Isai. liv. 5.*

The judge vouchsafes to be our advocate. And will he condemn those for whom he has long interceded? Will he condemn those for whom he poured out his prayers when

he was on earth, and on whose behalf he has constantly pleaded in the presence of God? 1 John ii. 1.

The judge condescends to be our head, and calls the weakest believers his members. And did ever any one hate his own body? Did ever any one delight to maim, or take pleasure to ruin his own flesh, and his bones? Col. i. 18. 1 Cor. xii. 27.

The judge has been our victim, the sacrifice for our sins. And will he consign those to damnation, for whom he endured the agonies of crucifixion? If he has given himself for us, will he not with this gift freely give us all things? Give us pardon at that awful day? Give us the crown of glory, which fadeth not away? Heb. ix. 14, 26.

Farther to confirm your faith, and establish your hope, it will be proper to consider, what you have to plead. The proud *Pharisee* made his abstaining from gross iniquities, and his punctuality in some external performances, his plea. The blinded Jews went about to establish their own righteousness, and depend on this broken reed for acceptance.—But we have a surer foundation, whereon to build our comfortable expectations.

It arraigned on the foot of guilt; great guilt; manifold guilt; aggravated guilt; long-contradicted guilt; we have an atonement to plead, a sacrifice of unknown value, a propitiation glorious and divine. We have the blood of the lamb to plead; blood that taketh away not one sin, or a few sins, or a multitude of sins only; but (O delightful truth!) taketh away all, all, all sins. Yes, it taketh away all sins from the believer, be they ever so numerous; all sins, be they ever so heinous. 1 John i 7. Rev i. 5.

Should the law take us by the throat, and make that severe demand, pay me, that thou owest.—It is paid, we reply, by our divine surety. An incarnate God has been obedient in our stead. In the Lord, the Lord Redeemer have we righteousness. And can the law insist on a more excellent satisfaction? Does not this magnify the law, and make it honorable? By the obedience of one (that is Christ)

shall many be made righteous. Isai xlv 24. Rom. v. 19.

Should it further be urged, "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."—Is not holiness the thing, for which we have longed? It is true, we have not attained to holiness; spotless and undefiled holiness; neither could we in the presence of temptation, and in a body of corruption—But has not our guilt been our sorrow, and our indwelling sin our heaviest cross? Have we not groined under our remaining iniquities, and been burthened with a sense of our failings? And are not these groanings, the first fruits of the spirit? Are not these the work of thy own grace, blessed Lord? and wilt thou not consummate in heaven, what thou hast thus begun up on earth?—Do we not desire heaven, chiefly because in those blessed mansions we shall sin no more; we shall offend our God no more; be no more forgetful of a dying Saviour; no more disobedient to the motions of a sanctifying spirit? And shall we be disappointed of this hope?—It cannot, cannot be.—They that hunger and thirst after righteousness, are not filled, while they abide in the flesh; therefore there remaineth the accomplishment of this promise, they will assuredly awake up after the likeness of their Lord, at the great resurrection day, and in another world, be fully, everlastingly satisfied with it.

I must now come to a conclusion:—But I cannot conclude without wishing you all joy and peace in believing.—Though your flesh and your heart fail, may God be the strength of your heart, and your portion for ever!—I daily, I frequently make mention of you in my prayers; and, what is better than all, the dearly beloved of the Father remembers you now he is in his kingdom.—

I am,

Your most affectionate Friend, &c.

LETTER LXXIX.

The following letter was sent to the preacher, by a rector in a country village; and is here printed, to shew, that thankfully the poor receive the preaching of the Gospel, and to preserve so remarkable, and useful a letter from perishing.

Reverend Sir,

I Humbly beg your pardon for presuming to write to you. Being one of your hearers, I was very much affected with your good sermons, having known and experienced the truth of them, viz. that persons must be convinced of their undone state by NATURE, and brought into a state of concern, or self condemnation, before they will seek and earnestly desire the knowledge of Christ crucified. To one who feels the condemning power of the Law, Christ is precious.—Such have tasted the bitterness of sin; for till then, they are alive without the law, as St. Paul saith; Rom. vii. 9. not seeing that the Law requires perfect obedience, and that theirs at the best is very imperfect.—Hence the best of us in our carnal state are striving to be justified by our own works; yea, though we cannot, but know, that we often break the Laws of God, Rom. iii. 20, and 28.

But then we think, it is true I am a sinner, and there is none without sin; thus we presume upon our seeming obedience, not considering how great a CHANGE must be wrought upon our soul by repentance; and that we must be united to Christ by faith, and partake of his likeness, without which, Christ, as to us, is dead in vain, (Gal. ii. 21.) And when the holy spirit has convinced us of our misery by sin, (John xvi. 8) and need of Christ: then, usually, we are thinking To do something to purchase an interest in him; not considering we must be humble suppliants, at his feet, waiting for every thing we want at the throne

of grace as repentance, pardon, sanctification, redemption, as purchased by **HIM**: (eternal life is the **GIFT** of God, Rom. vi. 23.)

It is the humbled person, who will accept of Christ, in all his offices, not only as a priest to atone for sin, but also as a prophet to teach, and a king to rule over him, and subdue all his sins.—The covenant of grace answers all our wants, there is not only mercy to pardon, but also grace to sanctify, and renew our nature. It is the humbled believer, who can sincerely say, *Christ is the power of God unto salvation*, (Rom. i. 16)

And now I think nothing more needful than for clergymen to preach as you do; for though christianity is generally professed amongst us, yet many seem as unconcerned about these things, as if there were no such truths in the gospel.—This is the way of preaching, which has ever been most effectual to the converting of sinners; and may the blessed spirit attend the word preached, *purifying the hearts of your hearers by faith*, (Acts xv. 9)—That the righteousness of Christ accepted, and applied to themselves, by a lively faith, may *intitle* them to heaven; (Rom. v. 19.) and that their *sincere*, through *imperfect* obedience, may *evidence* their title to be true and real, is the hearty desire of,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servant.

To true believers, the Law is set forth as a rule of manner, not as a law of condemnation, for there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. Rom. vii. 6. Or, in other words, love his commandments, as kind rules of life, not obeying (like legal people) with reluctance, and out of fear of being punished. There is not, perhaps, a greater, or more important truth, than that in proportion as our faith in the Redeemer, evidenced by our works, increases, so our fear of death proportionably decreases.

LETTER LXXX.

London, Jan. 8, 1751.

Dear Sister,

I Have taken my pen in hand to write to you, and have no news to transmit. I have nothing to send but my good wishes, and my best advice.

The old year is gone; and, if we look back, what a novel it appears! departed as a tale, that is told. Thus will our whole life appear, when our end approaches, and eternity opens: but eternity will never expire: eternity will last, world without end. When millions, unnumbered millions of ages are passed away, eternity will only be beginning. And this short life, this little span, is the seed-time of the long, long eternity. What we sow in this state we shall reap in the eternal state. Should we not therefore be careful, very careful, to improve our time, and make the best provision for an eternity of happiness? Should we not be careful to get faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; to get the love of God shed abroad in our hearts; and our souls renewed according to the amiable example of our blessed Redeemer.—This, and nothing but this, is true religion. Going to church, hearing sermons, and receiving sacraments, profit us nothing, unless they promote these desirable ends.—Fix, dear sister, this truth in your memory: a true faith in Christ, an unteigned love of God, and a real holiness of heart, are the greatest blessings you can desire. Without them we shall not, we cannot, enter into the kingdom of heaven. These you should incessantly, you should earnestly seek, through the whole advancing year; and these I must sincerely wish you, who am

Your very affectionate Brother,

JAMES HERVEY.

